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By Wayne Cheong

On the cover:

Theo James photographed by Cliff Watts. Outfits by BOSS.



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The Sparklers
Rocky Teoh
James Yew
Tommy Mason
Eddie Quah
And Many Others
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Organised by The Far East Beauty Congress Sponsored by Festival of Penang Organising Committee

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城 檳

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THIS WAY IN



LOOK AT ALL THE HILLS ALIVE with the sound of music! We humans cannot help but find music in anything, even money (re: Pink Floyd). Eat some great food and you'll start humming a tuneless tune, listen to a song and you'll remember the melody but not the words. Music is the foundation of the ancient human soul; you eat it, breathe it, jump to it and dream it. As Shakespeare said, "If music be the food of love, rock on!"

ESQUIRE ON THE WEB

PUNK ROCK AWAY

Now that this month's feature on the underground music scene's piqued your interest, go online and see our top 10 recommendations of local underground bands you should check out.

JUMP FOR LOUIS

Local music powerhouses (we're honoured!) got together for an exclusive Esquire X Louis Vuitton photoshoot, featuring the designer's latest kicks. See behind the scenes footage of the shoot on our Youtube channel.

CONNECT WITH US

You know once a month is not enough, so give us a like or a follow on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter—where you can get updates on our favourite weekend events, fashion and what goes on behind-the-scenes here at Esquire.

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THIS WAY IN



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@nicohulkenberg interview in @esquiremy #SingaporeGP #F1nightrace http://www. esquire.my/People/What-Ive-Learned/article/wil-nicohulkenberg

sskhaw Oh, hey! It looks like my story 'We have it in black' is out in @esquiremy 's August issue! :D http://www. esquire.my/NewsEvents/ Sneak-Peek/article/fashionissue-2015

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@casskhaw @esquiremy You made it into Esquire?! Congratulations! That's fucking amazing!



BE OUR LETTER OF THE MONTH

It's no secret that what we do, we do it all for you. We think about what might make you laugh, what might make you curious, what might make you care. And the best reward we get each month is when we receive letters from you, our readers, who in turn, make us laugh, puff up with pride, and sometimes, even-cry (though that's a very rare occasion). So why wait? Write in now!

Letters to the editor may be emailed to editor@esquire.my, or you can send us a message at facebook.com/esquiremy. Please include your full name, address and daytime phone number. Letters might be edited for length and clarity.

OUT OF CONTEXT QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I don't hate dancing but I certainly don't like it. That's why I don't go to discotheques."

> Godfather of disco and electronic music Giorgio Moroder doesn't like discotheques. Who would've thought? (See page 70)

BEHIND THE SCENES



Impromptu photoshoot in the office. Watch editor Leong Wong doubles as our in-house photographer too. (See page 26)



Behind the scenes with our lovely boys in white. (See page 160)



CHILLING WITH THE BAND

"Bila minat sesuatu, tak dapat income pun still buat. Macam minat kucing, perasaan dia sama. Macam first time you tengok Scottish fold lah, telinga kecil comel!"

—Topex, drummer of post-hardcore band, Ballroom Recital, one of the many bands we interviewed for the punk feature.

(See page 82)

NUMBER OF THE MONTH

The number of records that Radzi Jasni roughly owns since he started collecting records since he was 17.

(See page 66)



CORRECTIONS

In our October Issue, we identified Berlutti's leather specialist as Zehd but it should be Zied. We sincerely apologise for this error.



THIS WAY IN

EDITOR'S LETTER

Kam Raslan, acting editor-in-chief

HI THERE, I'M DAVID BOWIE and have you wondered sometimes about sound and vision? Actually, I'm not David Bowie. I'm Kam Raslan and I'm still here. In last month's issue of Esquire I told you all that my three months as the magazine's Acting Editor-in-Chief had come to an end but I've been asked to carry on for another two issues before the new guy arrives to take up the post permanently. Naturally I accepted because, heck, it's Esquire and because along with the job comes all sorts of exciting perks like endless invitations to glamorous events, shops stay open late just for me, red carpets are rolled out wherever I go and all sorts of other really amazing things that happen exclusively inside my own head.

I thought my time at Esquire had come to an end, and yet the music plays on, which also happens to be the theme for this month's issue. Our economy might not be doing too well and the political landscape is, er, peculiar, and yet the music plays on. We take everything in our stride, we dance to our own tune and whatever happens we make it work for us because eventually the beat will drop and we need to be ready. Music can be exhuberant, soulful, sad or boisterous, and in this month's issue we investigate the various beats and melodies of music, fame, food and fashion. We venture into deepest Pahang to meet some of



the denizens of Malaysia's remarkable and vibrant punk rock scene, we meet three of Asia's top chefs and along the way meet Theo James who, I am reliably informed, is going to be the next Big Thing.

I am not David Bowie (my doctor keeps telling me) but I also wonder sometimes about sound and vision. The only conclusion I've been able to draw is that the music plays on. And the music is good.

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Fikri Fadzil

Creative director of BLAM Design Studio, a creative multimedia studio focusing on graphic design, web design, copywriting and branding services as well as the founder of local music portal and platform, The Wknd, Fikri juggles between creative solutions by day and by night, championing local underground artists in the music scene. the-wknd.com (See page 72)



John Krich

Born in New York City and author of nine books including the acclaimed travelogue, Music In Every Room: Around The World In A Bad Mood, he was also the main food columnist for the Asian Wall St Journal. His best writings are collected in the book, A Fork in Asia's Road. John has been based in Asia for more than 15 years mainly in KL, Hong Kong and Bangkok. (See page 98)



Kean Wong

In the past 20 years Kean Wong has worked as a journalist for the BBC, The ABC, The Economist, The Sun and Men's Review. He also co-founded the Centre for Independent Journalism and is now based in Australia.

(See page 98)



Robert Raymer

An American based in Borneo, Raymer has been published well over 500 times. His stories have appeared in The Literary Review, London Magazine, Descant, Thema, The Writer and Reader's Digest. His collection of short stories Lovers and Strangers Revisited has won the 2009 Popular Readers Choice Awards and has been translated into French.

(See page 114)



A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME - WITH RIMOWA

The 192Os marked the beginning of modern air travel and the golden age of Hollywood. In 1919, Hugo Junkers presented the world's first all-metal commercial aircraft. It was made using the aircraft aluminum alloy discovered by Alfred Wilm in 1906. In 1950, RIMOWA presented its suitcase with the unmistakable grooved design made of the same material – at the time, it was the lightest suitcase in the world. RIMOWA was a real pioneer in the sector, starting the trend for lightweight luggage back then.

Germany since 1898

MAN AT HIS BEST / Mahb

THE VOCABULARY

Germinate your flowery nomenclature, it could help you sow your oats (pun intended).



Noun: A stock of plays, dances or pieces that a company or a performer knows and performs. While you may think it comes from the word "reputation", it actually originates from the Late Latin word "repertorium". (See page 50)

Dystopian

Adjective: The opposite of a utopian society whereby the living conditions are unpleasant and dehumanising, and people live in fear or danger constantly. (See page 74)

Gauche

Adjective: Somewhat unsophisticated and socially awkward. Always a perfect description for that weird uncle at family gatherings. You know the one we're talking about. If you don't... maybe it's you. (See page 230)

Rancid

Adjective: Food that has gone bad and is horrible in taste as well as smell due to it being old or stale. It's also the name of an awesome ska-punk band, if you're into that kind of music.

(See page 92)

Lugubrions

Adjective: Looking sad or mournful. Our faces when looking at the foreign exchange rate. (See page 36)

EUPHEMISM OF THE MONTH

The death knell sounded

The death knell is the ringing of church bells to announce a person's death. It is also used to signify the coming of an end. Jeng jeng jeng... (See page 106)



THIS MONTH

Six events that will get you off that couch and moving.

ALL DAY

5 HOURS

4 HOURS

3 HOURS

2 HOURS



Enjoy the company of strangers. You don't always have to look far for inspiration—open your mind and you'll often find it in your own backyard. On November 14, TEDXPetaling Street will tap into the local community to explore the road of lives less travelled, and how you can take the plunge. Talks are mainly in Mandarin, but a few are available in English. Find out more at tedxpetalingstreet.com



Skive off work. The saying goes, health is wealth, and someone believed in that enough to proclaim November 30 as Stay at Home Because You Are Well Day. No one knows how, why, when or where this started, but the objective is to call in "well" to work, and then just stay at home. But be warned! Exercise careful judgement, as we cannot guarantee a favourable response from your bosses.



Take root. Throw away those preconceived notions about your family's mother tongue, because here's something you can go to with po-po and gong gong. From November 21 to 28, KLPac will stage *Tales of 4 Dialects*, a performance that will take the audience on a musical journey through the Hakka, Hokkien, Cantonese and Teochew languages. Senior and student discounts are available. Get your tickets at ticketpro.com.my



Sit tight. If you've been on the edge of your seat since last August, waiting for the conclusion to TheatreThreeSixty's *Angels in America*, the time has now arrived. The theatre ensemble will be staging Tony Kushner's Pulitzer-winning, two-part play in its entirety at the Damansara Performing Arts Centre. Catch Part 1: *Millennium Approaches* and Part 2: Perestroika, both directed by Christopher Ling, from November 28 to December 13. For more information, visit facebook.com/theatrethreesixtymalaysia

Put your thinking cap on.

Grammy-award winning composer Fabio Luisi will conduct the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra through the "kaleidoscope of orchestral colours and effects" that is Mahler's Symphony No 7, a composition that audiences in the 1900s called confusing and incoherent. Decide for yourself when the MPO performs the piece on November 7 to 8. For tickets, visit mpo.com.my



1 HOUR

See the wood for the trees. There is world music, and there is world art. Galeri Petronas unveils "Pohon Budi" a new exhibition focused on artwork created with natural and sustainable materials. The free gallery, located on the third floor of Suria KLCC, will play host to 100 pieces of ecological artwork by established artists from 40 countries across the globe. Other events held in conjunction with the exhibition include a fashion show, a crafts symposium and an art bazaar. For more information, visit galeripetronas.com.my





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PLAY IT LOUD

How do you capture the collective nostalgia of an entire generation?

THERE IS A PRISTINE MOMENT in Martin Scorsese's *The Last Waltz*. It feels smoky—though I can't recall if it actually was or whether if it was just my imagination. You can hear the clickety-clack of pool cues in the background. And Levon Helm, the drummer and occasional vocalist for seminal rock group The Band, describes in his raspy Arkansas drawl, the great convergence of American music that makes up his roots—the likes of Muddy Waters, Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley and Bo Diddley.

"Bluegrass or country music," Helm says, "if it comes down to that area and mixes with the rhythm, and if it dances, then you've got a combination of all those different kinds of music." You then hear Scorsese, who is behind the camera, ask: "What is it called then?" To which Helm replies, almost incredulously: "Rock and roll." I was 19 years old when I first watched *The Last Waltz*, the 1978 film which documents The Band's farewell concert at the Winterland Ballroom in San Francisco, and even though I had already developed a reverence for the musicians in the movie—Robbie Robertson, Helm, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Neil Diamond, Van Morrison, Ronnie Hawkins, Mavis Staples—I came to it, not as a fan of The Band, but as a fan of Martin Scorsese.

Here he was, just a few years off *Taxi Driver* and *Raging Bull*, an absolute master at just 36, and taking on what was essentially a vanity project. Now don't get me wrong, The Band was great, quite likely the greatest in an era where freeform jams and endless improvisation had long been replaced by over-produced pop publications. But the concert film—the idea of trying to somehow fix on tape this fleeting, one-night only moment, so it could be replayed in the quiet comfort of your own home—now that was problematic.

Everything that had come before, from *Woodstock* to *The Concert for Bangladesh*, were more akin to a coffee-table book than actual literature. They felt tedious. They were flatly filmed. They felt like they were merely cashing in and cashing out.

Scorsese knew this. There was no way he was going to just point a few cameras at the stage and leave them running. And he would assemble a team, men behind the camera who were as great as those in front of it: Michael Chapman, László Kovács and Vilmos Zsigmond, cinematographers responsible for *Raging Bull, Easy Rider* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. And he would document this moment that was baggy and rambling, that was charming and friendly, that somehow managed to capture not just a moment in time, but also the collective nostalgia of an entire generation.

So there I was, in the quiet solitude of my college dormitory, watching, as the last great rock and roots band on the planet sang their songs, and for the first time, not feeling like a loser for being born in the '80s. To me, like all other children of that era, watching the Stones in their seventies or some second-rate vocalist fill in for Freddie Mercury are cold consolations. They are non-events, nothing more than epilogues for those of us born too late, for those of us who lament the fact that we aren't the product of some great era defined by musicianship and common purpose.

Martin Scorsese reimagined the concert movie as cinema. He made this 5,000-strong concert feel like something far larger than it actually was. It was epic. It was rock for the ages. And it felt like it was made for me. 18

t @umapagan

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MaHB / Film by Sam Parker

GROUND WORK

In Ridley Scott's new film, Jeff Daniels isn't on a mission to Mars—and he's JUST fine with that.

IT WOULDN'T be blockbuster season without a gripping-if-slightly-silly space movie, and filling the slot this year is sci-fi veteran Ridley Scott's The Martian. In it, astronaut Mark Watney (Matt Damon) travels to Mars with a crew made up of some of Hollywood's hottest young things (House of Cards' Kate Mara, Interstellar's Jessica Chastain), gets himself stranded, and is forced to survive using limited supplies and his own ingenuity. "I'm gonna have to science the sh*t out of this," as Watney somewhat cringingly puts it. Meanwhile, Jeff Daniels plays Teddy Sanders, the man trying to orchestrate the rescue mission back on little old Earth. We caught up with The Newsroom star about blockbusters, space travel and why he's happy here on terra firma.

ESQUIRE: So tell us about Teddy.

JEFF DANIELS: He's the bureaucrat at Nasa weighing up the risks of the mission, who decides it's better to lose one life than several. He says the things no one else wants to.

ESQ: What makes *The Martian* different to other space action movies?

JD: Well, it makes heroes out of people who know maths! It's a bit like *Apollo 13*, when they're trying to get [Tom] Hanks back safely by improvising maths and science on the fly. Same deal here. It's pretty exciting stuff.

ESQ: Did you read the Andy Weir novel the movie is based on?

JD: Was that a requirement of this interview?

Give me 20 minutes, I'll speed-read it... No, I've never really taken to sci-fi. I just got the job then went straight to Budapest and relied on Ridley Scott, who is a good guy to rely on.

ESQ: It's a movie partly set on Mars, but Teddy stays put. Did you ever wish you were up in the spaceship?

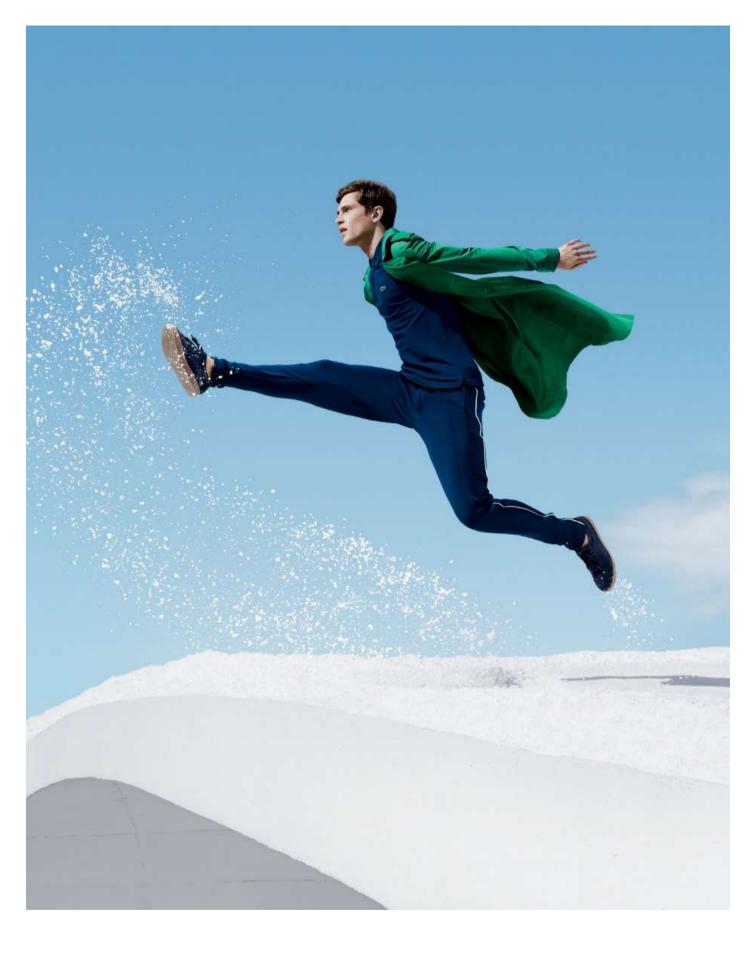
JD: No way! Look at what they had to wear every day, those space suits. I have no idea how they did the weightlessness thing, but it can't be good. It's either gonna be harnesses, or you're up in a plane spinning around at 12KM... I was very happy to be on the ground in Houston wearing a suit.

ESQ: Do you think it's important we keep exploring space?

JD: It's nice to know what's out there, but it isn't necessarily going to make my Friday any better, you know? I'd rather see the bits of Earth I haven't been to yet—Scotland, say—than do flybys of Jupiter or whatever. Though if I did go, I'd leave my cell phone at home and just take my guitar. That'd be good.

ESQ: Making blockbusters or doing TV shows like The Newsroom: which is better?

JD: TV is where the writing is, and with good writing comes better roles. On *The Newsroom* they kept telling us: "Go further! Go further!" Studio movies get noted to death by a junior executive saying, "Pull it back, that won't sell, forget that, cut that!" That said, there is something about walking onto a huge set like *The Martian*, seeing all the extras, what the designers have created, huge monitors piled 15M high... there's a thrill. And all I have to do is say the lines. At least, I think that's all I have to do. I just love the space between "action" and "cut". That's what's so exciting, even after all these years.



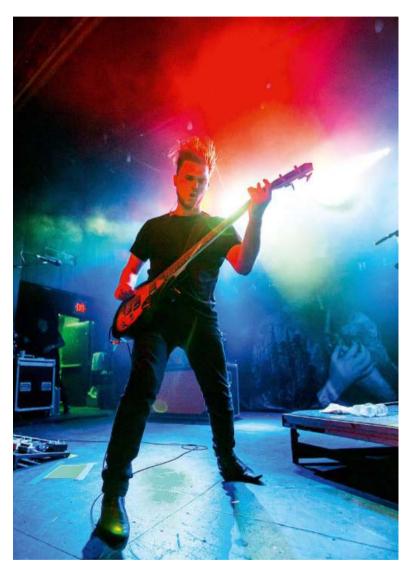
LIFE IS A BEAUTIFUL SPORT LACOSTE



MaHB / Music by Zack Yusof

GOING FOR GUITARS

Bands are dead, long live bands.



IN AN AGE WHERE THE DJ, mind-numbingly dull EDM and formulaic R&B are king, it's good to see guitar music hanging in there and continuing to make its presence felt. Reduced to the sidelines in recent times, thanks to the inexplicable rise in popularity of auto-tuned mechanised dance music with no soul, and even worse, the talentless drones who make a mint simply pointing, throwing their hands up in the air and "spinning" (read: cueing up MP3s on a MacBook) at cheesy nightclubs, guitar rock was at one point in danger of becoming an endangered species—a dinosaur liv-

ing on borrowed time. That is if the singles and album charts, and the hipster music blogs and websites are to be believed. But unlike the dinosaur, guitar music seems to be made of sturdier stuff.

Don't get me wrong. I'm no Luddite desperately clinging on to the dim and distant past where boys and girls with guitars were the epitome of cool and invention. On the contrary, this guitar rock freak was a self-proclaimed futurist and a huge fan of electronic music, when electronic music was actually cutting-edge and different. My first proper instrument? Not an electric guitar, but a Roland SH-101 synth. True story.

When the likes of Kraftwerk, Suicide, David Bowie, Brian Eno, The Human League and Cabaret Voltaire first discovered synthesizers and started experimenting with them in order to push the boundaries of popular music, it really did seem that electronica was the future. It was radical s**t, and it excited people. And it was art. In the early '90s, the techno/rave scene was also important, something akin to punk rock and seriously exciting to behold and be a part of. Then the whole scene got co-opted by the mainstream and the trendies, which is where the fun definitely stopped for me.

Fast-forward to the present day, and electronic music has become as radical as Justin friggin' Bieber and Miley friggin' Cyrus, which is as sad a state of affairs that popular music can ever have the misfortune of finding itself in. Thankfully, something good has come out the rise and popularity of horrible electronic pap: the fact that guitar music has become the outsider and been forced to reinvent itself again.

Today, in the face of a seemingly endless stream of terrible programmed muzak, there are still several bright shining lights around that are making a vital, intelligent and radical noise with guitars, and that number seems to be growing. This week, I'm digging on The Parrots, a noisy garage punk trio from Madrid, and Yak, another shaggy-haired trio from London. Both make some of the loosest, most anti-social rock 'n' roll around. They are but two of the modern guitar bands fighting the good fight at the moment. Then, there's Happyness, Parquet Courts, Royal Blood, Kagoule, Hooton Tennis Club, and the list goes on...

It's as if guitar rock had to stare down the barrel of the gun of extinction in order for it to wake up, haul itself back up on its feet and say, "You know what? We are not going to go quietly into that good night. We are going to fight for our survival." So, in a way, guitar music has everything to thank EDM for, because EDM has made it seriously cool to be a guitar-slinging, Keith Richards/Thurston Moore wannabe once again.

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MaHB / Music

UNHOOKED

There's a new New Order album and Peter Hook isn't happy. But should you be?



THE RIFT between former Joy Division and New Order bandmates Bernard Sumner and Peter Hook has been a real shame, but also pretty funny. Once responsible for some of the great pop music of the '80s and '90s, since their acrimonious split in 2009 they've been more likely to crop up in the press for trading insults (Sumner wrote in his autobiography, *Chapter and Verse*, that working with Hook was "unbearable by the end"; Hook went for the simpler option in an interview of calling Sumner "Twatto").

So we can all probably guess what bassist Hook made of Sumner's decision to release the new album *Music Complete* without him under the New Order name—the disputed use of which has already incited legal threats—making it the band's first entirely new record in 10 years. A statement on Hook's website offers one clue: "Everyone knows that New Order without Peter Hook is like Queen without Freddie Mercury, U2 without The Edge," We're sensing he's not keen.

So, is New Order without Hooky a lost cause?

If the ability to conjure up the band's trademark sound is a marker, then no: opener "Restless" has a melancholy guitar lilt that recalls 1987's "Ceremony", while "Nothing but a Fool" makes those minor to major key changes that feel both wistful and epic in that very New Ordery kind of way. As for innovation, there are more synths than for a while—even a full-blown techno-trance build on "Singularity"—and Iggy Pop offers a break from Sumner's lugubrious tones by singing on "Stray Dog".

There's much to appreciate and admire, even if some doesn't come off. But it's pleasing to see a band of New Order's stature willing to experiment with their sound, regardless of any experiments with the line-up. But wait, is that the hint of an olive branch on pacey electro closer "Superheated"? "We are so different, yet we're the same / Things that I remember that I wish I could change," sings guest vocalist Brandon Flowers. Perhaps, in the New Order story, there's another chapter and verse to come.



Above Love (or something) will tear them apart: New Order make their first album in a decade, Music Complete, minus founding bassist Peter "Hooky" Hook.



open your world





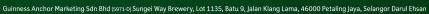


















MaHB / TV by Sophia Goh

STEPHEN COLBERT'S TRUMP CARD

How the new host of The Late Show set himself apart from the rest.

NOT SINCE GWEN STEFANI destroyed the pronunciation of his last name at the 2014 Emmy Awards has Stephen Colbert (pronounced "colebear") found himself standing in the glare of so many spotlights. Along with a curiosity to see how the new chap settles into his role as host of The Late Show (the throne room of David Letterman for almost 22 years) also comes a heightened level of scrutiny because the choice of Colbert was not without its sceptics. But unlike some of his peers that make up the new guard of latenight television, including Jimmy Fallon on The Tonight Show, Seth Meyers on Late Night, James Corden on The Late Late Show, John Oliver on Last Week Tonight and Trevor Noah on The Daily Show, not to mention the not-so-new guard of Conan O'Brien and Jimmy Kimmel, Colbert has a trump card up his sleeve.

As the host of *The Colbert Report*, he was a brilliantly over-the-top caricature of a conservative political pundit. One of the first questions people asked when it was announced that he would replace Letterman was whether he would be doing the show as himself. It was the logical choice, of course, but in stripping off the veneer of irony and sarcasm, the 51-year-old also has found a golden opportunity to remake himself for the next chapter and show television audiences who he really is. The result has been a series of profiles and interviews that not only has introduced Colbert to a far wider audience than his Comedy Central platform

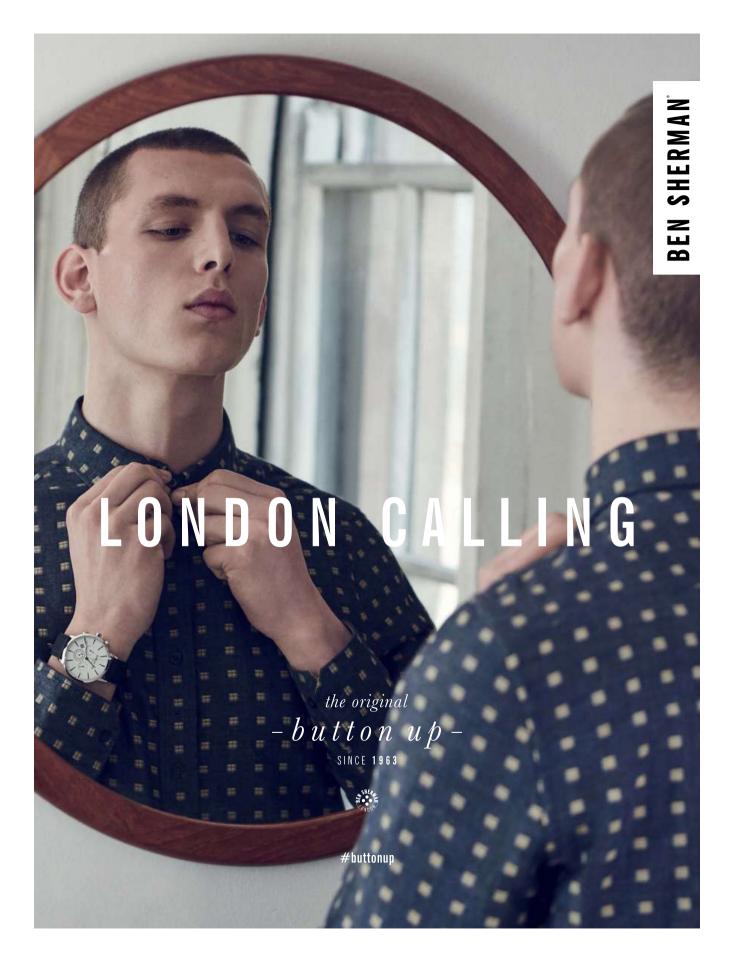
could have afforded him, but that also set him up as the most fascinating man on late-night TV.

Colbert has no qualms about discussing his devout Catholic beliefs in interviews, proving himself remarkably well-versed in Catholicism. The Sunday school teacher even did what can only be described as a "religious" interview with Father Thomas Rosica, media attaché to the Vatican press office. In the strictly secular world of mainstream television, Colbert's willingness to discuss his faith makes him an anomaly. And, in an industry where ratings are everything and the competition gladiatorial—kill your rivals or be killed by your bosses—being different just might be the key to survival.

For now, it's too early to return a verdict on The Late Show. Talk shows evolve, and whether or not Colbert will be able to turn his current gig into a long-term paycheck remains to be seen. Nevertheless, he has earned enough viewer credit to keep people interested, as he finds his stride, or at least, keep audiences checking in once in a while to see how he's faring. There's been a lot of talk recently about how late-night talk show hosts are pretty much all white males; thus putting networks under some pressure to at least pretend to be interested in diversity moving forward. To that end, Colbert might seem like just another white, male late-night talk show host, but I wouldn't discount his ability to bring perhaps a different kind of diversity to the table. 12

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PAVILION KL | BANGSAR VILLAGE II



MaHB / TV

EVERYMAN'S LAND

A disturbing new documentary trails anti-cartel vigilantes on both sides of the US/Mexico border.

Above Mexican standoff: Autodefensas vigilantes gather at a rally against the nation's vicious drug racketeers in a scene from Cartel Land. **EARLY ON** in producer-director Matthew Heineman's riveting documentary *Cartel Land*, captured in a greenish night-vision glow, Tim "Nailer" Foley and his rag-tag Arizona Border Recon cohorts pick their way along a barbed wire fence in the Altar Valley. They're looking for human traffickers, drug smugglers and scouts crossing the border from Mexico; they have abandoned any hope legitimate authorities might do this dirty work. For Nailer, it's a simple moral imperative: "I believe what I am doing is good, and what I am standing up against is evil."

A thousand miles away in Michoacán, Mexico, other everyday heroes are also mobilising. Seeking to end the horrific violence drug cartels have wrought on their towns, these residents—many of them whom are just old men past their fighting prime—are forming vigilante militias, running the gangsters out of town in chaotic, haphazard gun battles.

Their de facto leader and figurehead for the Autodefensas movement is Dr José Manuel Mireles. While Foley hands captives to the authorities, Mireles sets up road blocks, hunts known offenders, and is seen instructing a henchman how to deal with a cartel suspect: "get everything you can out of him and put him in the ground. Immediately."

But, as the documentary painfully reflects, it's not long before the notions of Old Testament justice make the good and bad guys harder to tell apart. Hearing rumours that vengeance is being meted out by the Autodefensas with the same savagery the cartels once inflicted, Dr Mireles—a Shakespearean antihero with, as is revealed, a Shakespearean fatal flaw—starts to understand the purifying ideals of his group are becoming clouded with blood.

The incidences of corruption in *Cartel Land*—which is so close to the action that you can more or less hear bullets whistling past—are staggering and astonishing. The Mexican portion is as grim and fascinating a portrait of the motives of men as any you'll see. It leaves Nailer and his border crusaders looking like kids kicking around in the dust. •



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MaHB / Media Man by John Lim

AND THE MUSIC PLAYED ON

Why it's good to talk.



"CONTENT IS KING" is an often-used idiom that has led many astray. Made popular by Bill Gates in a 1996 essay extolling the importance of content, the phrase is a sweet, digestible slogan that strengthens the conviction of content owners and creators.

But there is a darker undertone to that idea, one that is increasingly obvious as the Internet matures: that publishers and creators are only worth as much as the content they own or produce. As such, content is hoarded and protected, its owners fearful of the day it goes free. That day, as we know, has already arrived: the digitisation of information has made a vast amount of content—be it music, movies or news—infinitely replicable with a couple of keystrokes.

Not that it has stopped owners from eking out every last bit of value through old models: paywalls continue to be erected, scarcity is preserved through lawsuits, CDs and digital downloads are still being sold, and royalties continue to be demanded from streaming services. But those old ways are faltering. According to the British Phonographic Industry, income from recorded music fell from GBP1.2 billion in 2004 to just under GBP700 million in 2014. And where music streaming is concerned, the numbers no longer add up—not for the content producers anyway. Even as the Recording Industry Association of America announced it received more than USD1 billion revenue from streaming services, songwriters earned a pittance of USD90 for every million streams, according to Grammy-nominated songwriter Kevin Kadish.

And yet, the music industry is alive and kicking, and new artists continue to mushroom. One reason for that is rising revenue from live music: in 2014, live music generated almost USD30 billion in takings, according to data assembled from multiple sources by live-music service Songkick, compared with USD10 million in 1999. The supply and demand of live concerts is evident: in the UK, there were about 250 big festivals across the country last year, compared to 80 in 2004; Reading Festival has doubled its capacity since the '80s; and tickets for Glastonbury 2015 were snapped up in less than half an hour.

And the main beneficiaries appear to be the artists: according to music consultant Tim Chambers, artists can command up to 90 percent of gross ticket receipts, compared to the 10 percent net profit from recorded music sold.

The change in how value is obtained from recorded and live music emphasises the larger shift owners and creators have made in the digital age. Yes, content still matters. But it is not the only thing that matters, nor is it king.

What should be prized more than content are relationships. Companies like Google and Amazon understand this, and profit handsomely from it: by providing personalised services like Maps, Gmail and Google Now to its users, Google is embedded in and invaluable to a person's life, far beyond being just a search engine. Amazon sells to its customers, not just things, but also the experience of effortless purchasing, and the joy of receiving a package on time. Taylor Swift is constantly engaging her fans through social media, listening to what her audience likes, and delivering what they want with each album and live performance.

And digital media, rather than being a threat to owners and creators, is what makes creating these mass-scale relationships possible. With every click and status update, consumers send up digital signals that make it possible for owners and creators to know who we are and what we want. And that's where the real conversation on value begins.

t @johnlim

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FROM TIME TO TIME

IT IS GOOD

TO TAKE

YOURS

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TASTE THE
FRENCH WAY
OF LIFE



MaHB / Digital Man by Matt Armitage

THE SPANDEX FUTURES MARKET

As the future draws in, music labels and tangible forms of music become more and more irrelevant, but is that a bad thing?



I'LL LET YOU into a little secret: writing for magazines like Esquire is great fun but it's never going to buy me a mansion in Bel Air or Damansara Heights. Music could. I've seen Taylor Swift on YouTube. I've listened to Kanye rant. "I could do that," I thought. So, I'm learning the guitar and stocking up on spandex and getting ready to relaunch *Kulturpop* as a music label to launder my billions. The question is: how am I going to earn them? Isn't music free these days? If it is, that's an even worse business model than writing.

For years, industry moguls and cocaine frosted pop stars have bemoaned the piracy tearing the music apart and robbing them of the returns on their dubious art. Ever since Metallica's Lars Ulrich took on Napster and file sharers and tried to sue his fans in the Web 1.0 Dark Ages we've been bombarded with a non-stop barrage on the decline of the music industry.

Then it struck me: I don't know anyone who illegally downloads music anymore. While the movie companies still fret about territories and licenses and all of the ephemera that is irrelevant to an online global consumer base, music has somehow flipped into a parallel reality where it's expected to be instant and free.

I know a lot of people who still buy music. A lot

of my friends are music obsessives like me: many of them have embraced parenthood and switched their disposal income from recreational drugs to vinyl (where recreational drugs are legal, of course). We compare notes about the music on our favourite, esoterically-titled labels: 4AD, Warp, Mute, JagJaguwar, Bella Union, Domino, XL and Matador. To a generation that isn't interested in albums and owning music in a tangible form, labels are irrelevant.

Theirs is a world of Soundcloud, YouTube, Vimeo, 8Track, Bandcamp, Beatport, Last.FM, Spotify, Tidal, iTunes, Rdio, Deezer, Pandora. A smattering of the thousands of services that allow you to select from what seems like an instant catalogue of the entire history of recorded music. And this playlist generation knows how to game the system. Many of the services are free or have ad-supported tiers. Others are bundled with cellphone subscriptions. So these kids simply switch to whatever will let them listen for the least cost.

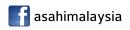
Of course, artists are crying foul. Revenue from music royalties – the money they get when you buy their work – has dwindled. Artists increasingly rely on radio, merchandising, endorsements and ads to pay the bills. Playing live no longer yields massive returns; touring is a costly precipice where too many bands chase too few ticket dollars. Historical giants like Led Zeppelin could book out the entire Chateau Marmont hotel when visiting LA and fill it with groupies and hangers-on and party for days on end, their contemporaries are more likely to be staying in a Holiday Inn and taking teary-eyed breakfast meetings with the tour accountant.

Despite these challenges, the Internet is full of more new music than you could possibly hope to listen to in a lifetime. What's looking increasingly unnecessary to a new generation of music makers is the old fashioned music label. Why hand over the larger portion of your earnings to another company when you can record it yourself at home for peanuts using state of the art software? Then release it digitally, avoiding the cost of pressing CDs and vinyl until you've built up a following.

A friend on the filmmaking course can direct your videos with a DSLR. Another friend 'doing' fashion can clothe and style you. You're far more adept at social media than the ageing twenty-somethings at the outrageously expensive PR and promotion companies, and virality is coded into your DNA like a newly birthed microbe. Like most of today's start-ups you'll figure out how to monetise it as you go along.

Music has always been an industry that consumes youth and talent. I'm at the wrong end of the age curve with guitar-picking fingers gnarled and blunted by the years of typing articles. But how I envy today's music-makers and their new and uncertain future.

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MaHB / Digital Man by Johnny Davis

GAME CHANGERS

Forget Candy Crush: the 25 best phone games you should be playing.



01 THE **EXECUTIVE** Battle werewolves

and protect your trillion-dollar mining company by acrobatic stunts/kung-fu over 120 levels. iOS.



02 LEO'S **FORTUNE** Beautiful platform game that pits

moustachioed bug Leo against various physicsbased puzzles, with longlasting addictive gameplay. iOS



03 FROZEN SYNAPSE PRIME Turn-based

tactical shooter across 40+ missions leading rebels to overthrow an evil corporation. The best Android strategy game. Android.



RIDICULOUS FISHING Tilt, tap and swipe

to catch fish using guns, chainsaws and toasters in this homage to 8-bit-style arcade games. iOS/Android.



05 NEED FOR SPEED: MOST WANTED Braking-is-

cheating street-racing game with revved-up graphics and 40+ customisable cars. Three years' old now, but satisfyingly updated. iOS.



06 80 DAYS Award nominated

steampunk game reimagining

Phileas Fogg's journey around the world. Travel by airship, steam-train or mechanical camel, iOS.



07 HITMAN GO The long-running strategy game franchise

reimagined as a board game. Fantastic stylised graphics, IOS.



08 BADLAND Action/adventure

puzzler with endless awards. Guide your forest dweller through a scary fairy-tale



09 MODERN COMBAT 5: **BLACKOUT** Certificate-16

"strong violence" shooter and successful transfer of the evergreen console classic. Android: Free + IAP.

land, iOS/Android: Free,



10 THE WOLF **AMONG US**

Fairy-tale characters are

murdered in this hardboiled, uber-violent thriller based on the Fables comics. Can you solve the crime? Android; Free + IAP.



11 RADIANT DEFENSE Strategy shooter

that involves preventing hordes of aliens from infiltrating your tower. Addictive, Android: Free + IAP.





GOAT

SIMULATOR

Cause as much

destruction as you

can, as a goat,

Genius, iOS,

MONUMENT VALLEY

Apple's Game Of The Year 2014 is a beautiful, surreal platform game inspired by geometry and minimalist 3D design. iOS.



14 GEOMETRY WARS 3: DIMENSIONS **EVOLVED**

Award-winning arcade shooter series. Battle waves of enemies across 3D grids with console-quality graphics, iOS.



15 THE WALKING **DEAD: SEASON** TWO

Unsettling episodic game with tailored decisionmaking gameplay and artwork inspired by the original comics of the show. iOS/Android; Free + IAP.



16 DARK NEBULA HD-**EPISODE TWO**

A "labyrinth game on steroids". Tilt the screen to avoid traps by guiding your character through 19 levels across six

environments iOS



17 THE SIMPSONS: TAPPED OUT

Homer's caused a meltdown in Springfield. Now it's up to you to rebuild it! Charming, constantly updating city-building game. Android; Free + IAP.



18 CRAZY TAXI: CITY RUSH

Drive like a maniac through city and beach to deliver your passengers on time. You can also customise your cabs. iOS/Android: Free + IAP.



TRANSISTOR Strategy/

fighting game as you wield a "weapon of unknown origin" through stunning sci-fi backdrops. iOS



. 8

IMPLOSION - NEVER **LOSE HOPE**

Top-down arcade race game set 20 years after the fall of Farth, Score by Grammywinning Lord Of The Rings engineer John Kurlander iOS.



21 BEACH **BUGGY BLITZ** Cartoon buggy

racer with "infinite drive" (you can go for miles, never passing the same scenery) plus swamps. caves, giant crabs etc.



Android; Free + IAP.

22 BEAT SNEAK BANDIT Sixties spy

graphics meet rhythmically controlled gamenlay in this original puzzler, Aim? Steal the world's clocks back from Duke Clockface, iOS



23 FOOTBALL MANAGER HANDHELD 2015

Call the tactics from your digital dugout. This version has a new Scouting Agency to monitor the 50 top players. Android; + IAP



24 LARA CROFT: **RELIC RUN** Run, swing

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MaHB / Food by Fay Khoo

LISTEN UP

Friends, Malaysians and epicureans, lend us your ears...

LIKE OTHER CHEFS before him. Britain's Heston Blumenthal has long understood the importance of sound in dining. Just as the taste of a childhood food triggers memories long forgotten, so too is sound very effective in creating unforgettable dining experiences. His "Sound of the Sea" dish-featuring, incidentally, seafood and edible seaweed on a mound of tapioca "sand"—was first served at Blumenthal's The Fat Duck restaurant in Berkshire to the sound of breaking waves in 2007. Almost a decade on, we are now aware that virtually everyone has synesthetic abilities when it comes to taste. In much the same way that the visual aesthetic of the "sand" and seaweed triggered connections to the seaside, the sound of breaking waves made the fish taste fresher, and the ocean brine of the oyster more vivid. More importantly, it encouraged diners to think about the correlation between sound and the appreciation of food.

To further reinforce how influential auditory elements are in the way our brains process food, Blumenthal—with Oxford University's Dr Charles Spence-served bacon and egg ice cream to customers, with accompanying sounds of either bacon sizzling or chickens clucking. No surprises that when the bacon sizzled, diners reported a more pronounced bacon flavour in their dessert. and vice versa.

Which is why it's especially preposterous that restaurateurs squander a fortune on décor, lighting, food presentation, and even the menu, but often neglect what should be an integral part of the dining experience: music. I cannot count the number of times I've been unable to finish my meal because the music was so loud it turned my appetite off, and I imagine I'm not alone in this. A 2011 study found that loud background noise suppresses gustatory enjoyment and our sensorial perception of sweetness and saltiness, which could also be the reason why I hardly ever eat on long-haul flights. (Although I suspect the qual-



ity of the airline food, or deplorable lack thereof, plays a big role, too.)

Therefore, some free advice to restaurateurs: the next time you're planning an eatery, it would be worthwhile for you to invest some thought in the auditory repertoire that your customers are subjected to, because the right soundtrack could potentially be immensely lucrative to your bottom line. But while it seems obvious that soft music causes enhanced gastronomic pleasure and, ipso facto, diners to linger longer, why then are so many otherwise decent restaurants so determined to blast music that's not merely louder than a commercial airline, but also musically inappropriate? If even Kobe cows are given soothing classical music to listen to in order to facilitate greater marbling content in their flesh because of the relaxing qualities of the tunes, then surely human beings will respond even more keenly to music that augments their gustatory enjoyment? On a more personal level, the next time you entertain, start your music soft, then speed it up as the evening progresses, especially if you've had enough and want your guests to exit pronto. Yes, it works, and you're welcome. 12

L @misskhoo

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MaHB / Food by Ian Loh

CLAWS FOR CELEBRATION

There is something reassuring about a restaurant that is confident enough to whittle its menu down to just one protein: lobster.



singapore's pince & pints arrived on our shores recently, and it has already proved to be one of the best places for lobster in KL. What's more, there's absolutely no hassle when it comes to ordering, as the menu only features five dishes. The only challenge you face is extracting as much meat from the shell as you can and working out how much herbed butter sauce you want to drench it in. It's safe to say that this is not a first date restaurant, so take someone you feel comfortable slurping up a lobster's briny juices in front of. Alternatively, here's a simple recipe that you can recreate at home. And the best way to enjoy it, per our endorsement? All washed down with a glass or two of white.

GRILLED WHOLE LIVE LOBSTER

Instructions

- 1. Live whole lobster (600-620g), filleted in half.
- 2. Glaze with butter and lightly season with salt.
- 3. Grill for a total of 7-9min: meat side 5min, flip over for additional 2min on the shell.

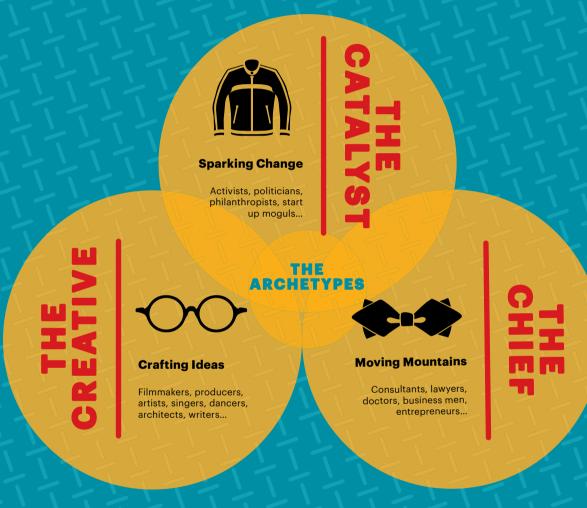
Serve with

- A mesclun salad tossed with a sour cherry and balsamic dressing; add fresh watermelon slices or roasted almonds if desired.
- 2. Straight-cut fries, deep-fried for 2-2.5min.
- 3. A melted butter dipping sauce and a slice of lemon.

Esquive BEST DRESSED REAL MAN 2015

Style & Substance

We're changing it up this year by looking at identifying the dapper gents who fall under three distinct Esquire archetypes.



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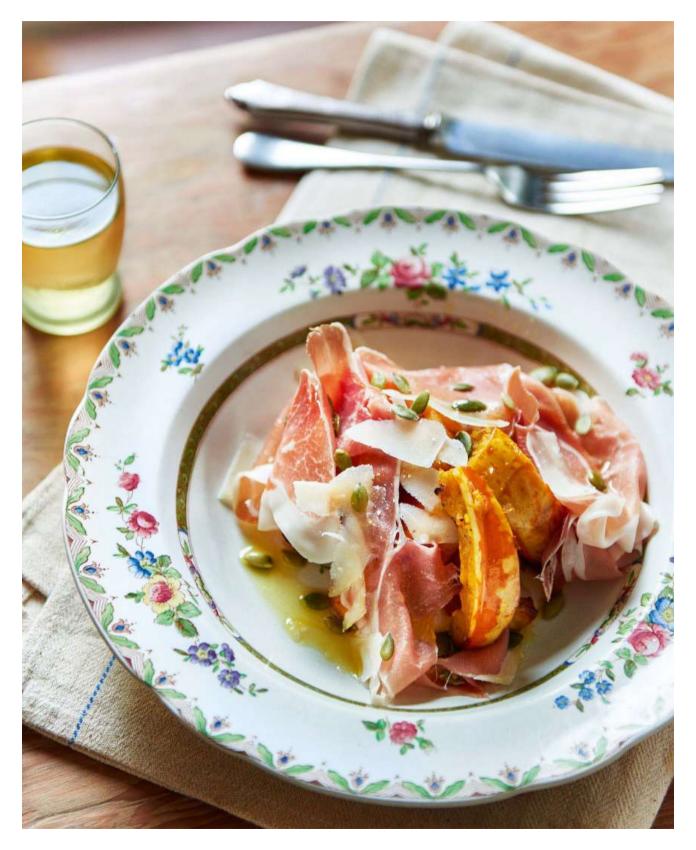
ALFRED DUNHILL



MaHB / Food by Russell Norman

OFF THE EATEN TRACK

Russell Norman recommends going local for a real taste of Venice.



GOOD RESTAURANTS are born of passion. It might come from a desire to serve the very best food in the neighbourhood, or it could stem from an expertise and love for fine wines. Maybe it's a deeply held instinct for generosity and hospitality that sets the restaurant apart from its competitors. For me, and for my first London restaurant Polpo, it was my obsession with a city-Venice.

If you've been there, you will be fully aware of its ability to seduce and stupefy. It is common to hear of visitors suffering from Stendhal Syndrome—a condition that renders victims queasy, faint and speechless—as they struggle to absorb and process Venice's overwhelming beauty. Been there. Done that. But what still draws me to La Serenissima, now I've hardened myself to its aesthetic charms and strengthened my immune system to its hypnotic lure, is the surprisingly vibrant and youthful food scene.

First, however, a word of warning. It is very easy, as an unsuspecting tourist, to get duped into thinking a packed, well-lit restaurant overlooking the Rialto Bridge where the waiters are all dressed like gondoliers is a safe bet. Wrong. With few exceptions, restaurants with a view are tourist traps with mediocre food that's about as authentic as the plastic trinkets sold in St Mark's Square. Restaurants with large displays showing photographs of all the food? Run away! Remember, very long menus listing every Italian classic and 30 different pizzas are a dead giveaway, too. There is a direct inverse relationship between the length of a menu and the quality of the food.

Opposite Norman's pumpkin

and prosciutto main.

the bàcari that nestle in the unfashionable backstreets. These tiny wine bars serve small snacks and dainty tumblers of young local wines, but the quality of ingredients is high and the recipes and traditions are passionately authentic. The locals eat here

The culinary heart of Venice is to be found in and it is where you should eat, too: my favourite is

All'Arco. For a sit-down meal of exceptional quality, freshness and simplicity, you can do no better than Alle Testiere (osterialletestiere.it). As a rule, any Venetian restaurant that belongs to L'Associazione dei Ristoranti della Buona Accoglienza (veneziaristoranti.it) has committed to cooking real food in the genuine traditions of the region.

But, like all good restaurants anywhere in the world, these places are driven by passion. Add to that a fastidious connection to the seasons and a slavish daily pilgrimage to the morning market at Rialto, and you have a real recipe for success. (Many good restaurants in this city refuse to open on Sundays and Mondays because the fish market is closed.)

No matter what time of the year you visit, a market trip is an essential part of your itinerary. October is particularly lovely in Venice. The fruit and vegetable market positively glows orange at this time of year with a good range of pumpkins and squashes. Here is a startlingly simple recipe (below) that makes the most of a small number of ingredients to great effect. It's one of those dishes that's greater than the sum of its individual parts. If you can, ask the delicatessen to slice your prosciutto as thinly as possible—you want to be able to almost see through it. 12

Russell Norman owns and runs Polpo, Polpetto, Mishkin's and Spuntino, all in London.

ROASTED PUMPKIN WITH PROSCIUTTO AND PARMESAN

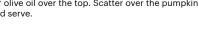
Serves six

Ingredients

- · 2 medium butternut squash
- (or acorn squash) 1 heirloom pumpkin
- (chioggia and iron bark are also good varieties)
- 12 very thin slices prosciutto
- 200g grated Parmesan Extra virgin olive oil
- Handful torn sage leaves
- Handful pumpkin seeds
- Flaky sea salt
- Ground black pepper

Instructions

- 1. Preheat the oven to 200°C. Cut the squash and pumpkin in half and remove the seeds and the hard stalk. If the skins are thick, remove these, too, with a peeler or a very sharp knife. Cut the remaining pumpkin and squash into bite-sized pieces and toss them in a roasting tray with a good pinch of salt, a few twists of pepper, the sage leaves and a good glug or two of olive oil.
- 2. Once all the pieces are well coated, place into the oven for 20-30mins until cooked through. To test, push a skewer into the flesh; if it's done there should be little or no resistance.
- Remove from the oven and while still warm, divide equally among six warmed plates. Loosely drape over the prosciutto, distribute the Parmesan and pour a good drizzle of olive oil over the top. Scatter over the pumpkin seeds and serve.

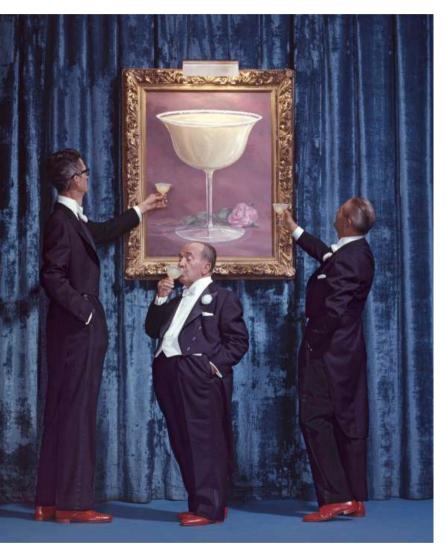




MaHB / Drinking by Ben Ng

LIQUID COURAGE

A little research never harmed anyone, especially now that you have a friend called Google.



ENJOYING A FEW SWIGS in Malaysia is becoming a costly affair, and it's become all-too familiar to us. We wait for every annual budget announcement with bated breath, hoping for no increase in alcohol taxation. Further adding salt to the wound is the current state of our currency, which is pushing prices up because most of these products are imported. Even with locally brewed beer, we need to import the grains; hence, prices are also affected by a weaker ringgit.

Having said that, it's important to get the best of what you're paying for, and that would be to wise up as consumers. Avoid just going for quantity deals, but rather look out for quality ones. A change in this habit among consumers will encourage bar operators to work harder on providing better quality drinks. This may sound like a tired cliché, but focusing on quality can change the way we enjoy our drinks. Investing in quality does make us more discerning when it comes to our drink choices. You tend to be more appreciative of every sip.

Head to a bottle shop today and you'll be overwhelmed by the unique bottles sitting on the shelves silently beckoning you to take them home. You'll feel very much like a four-year-old in a toy store. From artisanal exotic gins to prize whiskies, the selection seems endless. Most of the time, we are all spellbound by the look of the bottle and the story about the drink. A fair amount of bottles are just as good as the story told. Find out more about what's really inside before making a purchase. Read the label and try to makes sense of what is printed on it. Look for factual information, such as the distillation process and the ingredients used in the alcohol's production, rather than a load of marketing "legend". Lastly, get on your phone and conduct some quick research by searching reviews online. Passionate producers usually give priority to listing facts on their labels, instead of some fancy story.

Price indication can be one of the most common references when it comes to the quality of a drink. But it's not necessarily the case, as there are really good drinks out there that are a fair deal. A RM500 bottle of 18-year-old single malt Scotch whisky might not be necessarily better than a 12-year-old that costs RM250. Go for one that suits your budget and find out more about its taste profile before buying. And don't be afraid to explore the lesser-known labels; they may be just as good or even better. Avoid bottles that are overpriced because that's usually from the investor speculation over their perceived value, such as the recent trend of some Japanese whiskies commanding exorbitant prices, but do not necessarily match up with their taste. If you're going to pay a hefty sum for a bottle, always find out what the other labels are that you could get for the very same price. You might just be surprised. 19

t @Ben_Ng

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MaHB / Drinking by David Wondrich

WHAT TO DO WITH LIQUEUR

An alternative to, uh, just drinking it.



THE BEST. MOST ENDURING cocktails are almost always simple things, with no more than two or three core ingredients. Gin and dry vermouth; whiskey, sugar, and bitters; rye, sweet vermouth, and bitters; white rum, sugar, and lime juice; tequila, Cointreau, and lime juice; cognac and white crème de menthe (okay, so we like stingers). Made with care and quality ingredients, they are delicious 100 percent of the time, day in, day out, world without end. And yet. After 100 perfect oldfashioneds, that perfection doesn't stop us from

wondering if just this once it could be a little...different. Back in the 19th century, in the first golden age of the cocktail, bartenders remedied the situation by keeping the drink exactly the same except for the addition of a barspoon-a mere quarter ounce, as the spoons were at the time-of some interesting liqueur or cordial. Not enough to throw the concoction out of whack, but just enough to show it in a new light, like

Above A barspoon's worth goes a long way.



when your life partner suddenly displays a previously hidden aptitude for the tango.

Until the past few years, the problem with this trick was that there weren't all that many liqueurs available that made it worthwhile. Chartreuse, Bénédictine, sure. Grand Marnier, Cointreau, and a handful of others. Beyond that, things ran to butterscotch schnapps and fruity varieties in Technicolor. Since the first rule with the added spoonful is "do no harm," that was an issue-who wants a melony manhattan? But as with whiskey, gin, and just about every other decent spirit, recent years have brought us a liqueur revival, with both new and newly imported entries in old categories and entirely new liqueurs that aren't based on middle-school flavour cravings. Here are five of our favourite recent examples, each tested on its own and with a spoonful added to a plain daiquiri, to see how it works in a citrusy drink, and to a manhattan, to see how it handles the more intense and boozy ones.

The best all-arounder is the [1] Bigallet China-China Amer (40% ABV). A classic 19th-century bitter-orange-flavored French digestif, the Bigallet gives the daiquiri a lovely, bitter edge without overpowering it, but it is still intense enough to make its presence known in a manhattan, adding depth to both the vermouth and the bitters.

[2] The Combier Doppelt Kummel Extra (38% ABV), an intense cumin-and-caraway-flavored liqueur usually from the Baltics, tramples all over the daiquiri. It goes together with rye whiskey, however, like caraway seeds and rye bread, and makes a spectacular manhattan.

Each of the other three makes for a fine, unique daiquiri but doesn't stand out as much in a manhattan. [3] The Crème de Noyaux from Tempus Fugit (30% ABV) is an artisanal revival of something last seen in the US in the 1980s. Its nutty marzipan notes (it's made from apricot pits, almonds, and various spices) turn a daiquiri lush and smooth. In a manhattan, it somehow seems to lighten up the drink. So does [4] Jack From Brooklyn's Sorel (15% ABV), flavoured with hi-

biscus flowers and nutmeg and such. The Sorel works wonders in a daiguiri, adding subtle floral notes and rendering the drink mellow and aromatic. [5] The Kronan Swedish Punsch (26% ABV) is a citrus-free punch based on Batavia arrack, a funky cousin of rum that is also used as a liqueur. In a daiquiri, it sends the rumminess into overdrive. If it seems a bit confused in a manhattan, at least it doesn't screw it up. Mission accomplished, more or less. 12



MaHB / Books by Miranda Collinge

STILL LIFE

An intimate photo shoot with James Dean makes for a surprisingly stirring movie.



THE RELATIONSHIP between a photographer and a celebrity subject is a curious one. Part collaborative, part parasitic; part intimate, part exploitative. And then there's the question of who's exploiting whom: the photographer hoping to sell glimpses of the star's private life for a quick buck? Or the star inviting the snapper into his confidence to use him in his own quest for glory?

As a rock photographer-turned-director, Anton Corbijn—Control (2007), A Most Wanted Man (2014)—is in an excellent position to cast light on the nuances of this dynamic in his fourth feature film, Life, which explores the genesis of a series of photographs that Dennis Stock took of James Dean in early 1955 for Life magazine. A book of the photos—which captures Dean bumbling around in sunny LA, rainy New York and at his aunt and uncle's house in rural Indiana—is being published to coincide with the film's release and the 60th anniversary of Dean's death.

It might seem like a slight topic for a drama,

though perhaps less so given the obsession with celebrity and privacy in the current age. Corbijn also has two powerful leads working for his cause: Robert Pattinson as Stock, an interesting choice for a young man so painfully familiar with what it feels like to be on the other side of the lens; and model-cum-actor Dane DeHaan as Dean, himself a destined-for-greatness actor who plays Dean as less of a heartthrob, more of a weirdo, and all the more interesting for it.

Of course, the fact that Dean would be killed, aged 24, in a car crash later that same year, after he'd just filmed *Rebel Without a Cause*, the role that would make him an icon, loads everything with a certain poignancy. But Corbijn's understated direction and measured pace (a final voiceover is the only misstep), Charlotte Bruus Christensen's sublime cinematography and Owen Pallett's sophisticated jazz soundtrack make for an incredibly beautiful, elegant piece of film-making that manages to be intriguing and thoughtful on its own quiet terms. 18



Above Dennis Stock: James Dean by Dennis Stock is published on October 6 (Thames & Hudson) to coincide with the release of the new movie Life.

MaHB / Books by Benjamin Percy

STEPHEN KING WILL DIE

A new collection about what awaits us all.

IT'S NOT SURPRISING that Stephen King is writing about death. It's how. And it's why. "I think that most people tend to meditate more on what comes next as they get older, and since I'm now in my late 60s, I qualify in that regard," he writes in the introduction to the story *Afterlife*, one of many in his new collection—The Bazaar of Bad Dreams—that stare into the abyss awaiting us all. "When you boil it down, there are only two choices. Either there's something, or there's nothing." And in King's stories, there's always something. Something darkly transcendent that takes us beyond the limits of everyday experience.

Readers associate King with the supernatural, and there are plenty of demented "what if" scenarios in here, including *Obits*—about a columnist who kills people by writing their obituaries—and an O. Henryesque masterpiece called *Dune*, which features a man who sees names written in the sand, the names of those who will soon die.

But horror is not this collection's genre so much as its emotional core. Raymond Carver could have written *Premium Harmony*, about a bickering couple whose stop at a convenience store takes a morbid turn. *A Death* concerns a cognitively disabled man accused of murder in a small western town. *Batman and Robin Have An Altercation* follows a middle-aged son, Sanderson, and his elderly father. The two of them meet up every week when he picks up Pop from the old-folks' home and treats him to lunch. Pop has moments of clarity, but mostly he's lost in the fog of dementia. He makes an unlikely savior when on the way home they're struck by a souped-up truck with a wild-eyed, muscle-jacked driver.

One of my favorites, *Morality*—first published in Esquire in July 2009—involves a financially struggling couple who take on a dangerous proposal that will secure their future. Chad is a substitute teacher trying to finish his first book. Nora is a health-care worker who looks after a retired minister recovering from a stroke. The Reverend



Winston has never sinned and wishes to commit one—a major one, something entirely against his nature—before he dies. He will pay Nora USD200,000 if she agrees to his proposal. It's not what you'd expect—he doesn't want her for sex or murder—but the choice the couple makes will have devastating effects on their mental wellbeing and their relationship.

There's a reason so many horror television series—*The Twilight Zone, Tales from the Crypt, American Horror Story*—are anthologies. Horror is difficult to sustain. I love the immersive experience of reading King's big, meaty novels, but there's something so satisfying and terrifying about these 10-, 15-, 20-page stories, each of them like a moan rising from the basement, a pale face appearing in the window, a long-fingered hand dragging you into the darkness beneath your bed. **12**

MaHB / Business by Ross McCammon

HOW TO DEAL WITH A**HOLES

A quick and helpful guide to deal with your difficult boss.



I AM OFTEN MISTAKEN FOR AN A**HOLE.

But I am not an a**hole. I'm a prick. I'm not proud of it. But that's just what I am sometimes at work: a prick. Which is much more nuanced. Prickery is often the result of nerves and pressure, and its intensity fluctuates depending on the situation.

A**holes are not nuanced. They are a**holes when the pressure is on. They are a**holes when the pressure is off. It's this lack of nuance that makes them easy to identify.

Their traits include:

- Narcissism. (I'm the most special of all of you.)
- Impatience. (If I want it, I want it now.)
- Aggressiveness. (Get out of my way.)
- Entitlement. (That's mine. Because it is.)
- Delusion. (Who are you calling an a**hole?)
- · Obliviousness. (Are you crying?)
- Also: Utter predictability.

Which is why you should steer clear. If you sense that a prospective boss is an a**hole, think about whether you want a narcissistic, delusional aggressor having so much power over you.

But we cannot always steer clear. A**holes often disguise themselves as pricks or, even more slyly, as mensches and martyrs, before unleashing their a**holery upon unsuspecting coworkers.

So first, they must be accepted. (They will not change.)

Second, they must be embraced. (This works only if you are able to control your rage and understand that you are responsible for your reaction.)

Third, they must be engaged. (No one is more surprised by confrontation than an a**hole. But they must be confronted.)

Because it cannot get worse. A**holes make every situation as bad as it can possibly be. That's why they're a**holes; they are 100 percent awful at all times.

And so you have nothing to lose. Engage them. Here is a question that has worked for me: "Why would you do that?"

This forces the a**hole to account for their a**holery. And because a**holery cannot be accounted for, it is an impossible question to answer.

The point is to tell them: I see what you are up to. You are making them slightly self-aware. And self-awareness to the a**hole is water to the Wicked Witch, a proton torpedo to the Death Star's thermal exhaust port, a gust of wind to Donald Trump's hair.

We think of them as strong and destructive. While they are destructive, they are not strong. Their obliviousness makes a**holes so odious, but it's this obliviousness that makes them so weak and easily flustered.

No, a^{**} holes are easy. It's the pricks you need to watch out for. 18

QUIZ: ARE YOU AN A**HOLE?

Hi there!

☐ Hi! (-5 points)

☐ Hi. (0)

☐ Yeah? (5)

Upon whose terms must all social interaction happen?

☐ Mine (10)

☐ The community of citizens' (-5)

Where are you on your journey?

- ☐ Maneuvering my way to the top (1)
- the top (1)

 Picking off enemies (3)
- Raging at imagined obstacles (5)
- At the top, finally! (7)
- ☐ Derailed (9) ☐ Falling hard (15)
- Just pluggin' away here!
- How's your journey, friend?! (-20)

Have you ever been drinking with two assistants after work and one of them asks you an innocuous question but it just sets you off and you make a scene, almost like you had some negative feelings bottled up inside, all because of your

☐ That's really specific. (0)
☐ Yeah, it sounds like you may be working through some stuff with this one.

I'll accept that.

stress level?

☐ Cool. (0)☐ Cool. (0)☐

KEY: Fewer than O points:

You are repressed and need to stop bottling up your emotions because someday they're gonna explode. O to 9 points: You experience the full range of human emotions, but your consideration for other people prevents you from being an a**hole.

10 to 19 points: You are a son of a b*tch. 20 to 24 points: You are an a a**hole.

More than 25 points: You vare a sociopath.

MaHB / Health by Rodney Cutler

THE NOT-SO-BATTERED FOOT

How both sandal loungers and endurance athletes can take better care of the most abused extremity.

FIRST, A QUESTION: Do you wash your feet? As in, while showering, do you lift them up or crouch or sit cross-legged on the shower floor and scrub them with soap? (Do not confuse these with just splashing them around.) Many people-Olympic endurance athletes included-forget this basic hygienic process, which would rid them of, say, three quarters of their problems. However, you can do more.



YOUR SHOES

Everyone: Stagger two

pairs. It takes more than a day for the sweat in your shoes to dry, but most day-jobbers allow about half that between wears. Dampness accumulates, making your shoes a lovely château for bacteria, which smell, or fungi, which itch. If needed. try common talcum powder, too-or in dire circumstances, a highcaliber antiperspirant like Certain Dri Clinical Strength (shop. dsehealth.com), which you can get without a prescription.

Athletes: Stagger two pairs for dryness. But when breaking in a new set, switch mid-workout instead of daily. Wear the new ones first to mould them into form, but put on the old pair before the friction blisters your foot. (Yes, this requires the purchase of new footwear before the current pair tears at the seams.) If it's too late, use antibiotic cream and a covering, like a bandage or Spenco 2nd Skin (spenco.com). which adds a cooling sensation.



YOUR SOCKS

Everyone: Use them. Wash

them. Do not reuse them before washing them. Athletes: See above.



YOUR NAILS Everyone: Trim them.

leaving a short edge that hangs over the end of the toe. Cut them straight across; don't dia into corners. Going too short can lead

Athletes: Trim them just shy of the end of your toes so that you don't bash the end of your nail into the toe box of your shoe step after step. This should help avoid blackened nails-but also know that you can safely grow out a black nail. As for a loose black nail: Fasten it with a Band-Aid or, if the skin below isn't too raw, sure, pull it off.

to ingrown nails.



THAT **DRYNESS Everyone:**

As you get older, your sweat and oil glands decrease. Spread a thin layer of petroleum jelly over your feet nightly. Not enough to stain your sheets. Not beneath socks. Not in between your toes (keep that area dry). The jelly will moisturise better

than lotions, which are water-based and don't hydrate as well.



THOSE CALLUSES Athletes: Building

calluses is your foot's way of cushioning its contact with the ground. Wearing inserts like the Hapad sports replacement insoles (hapad.com) will minimize that collision. You can also use the **Emjoi Micro-Pedi callus** remover (emjoi.com) to buff them away, as the top layers of calluses are just dead skin anyway. 18 With thanks to Thomas DeLauro, chair of medical sciences, New York College of Podiatric Medicine, and Ralph Reiff, executive director of St. Vincent Sports Performance and manager of athlete care for the 1996 Olympic Games.

Rodney Cutler is an Ironman triathlete and the owner of Cutler salons in New York City.

ADVICE FROM **AN OLYMPIAN TURNED RUNNING-**STORE OWNER

With Bob Kennedy, former holder of the American records for the 3K, two-mile, and 5K, and president of Movin Shoes.

It's partly about the type of shoe. Most people pronate, meaning as their foot strikes the ground, their ankle rolls inward. Experts at your local running store can see whether you pronate a lot. (The at-home test doesn't work well.) If so, they may recommend a dens midsole, the cushy material of which works against the pronation. But it's also about the fit. We all have different foot shapes and nuances to our toes and arches. Experts can see all that, too.





MaHB / Sport by Andrew Whitelaw

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

It's all a matter of chants.



THERE ARE TIMES when describing football chants as "music" would be slightly flattering, perhaps a tad romantic and bordering on delusional. And yet, there are so many classic instances of football crowds creating an undeniably magical atmosphere when standing in unison, roaring choruses of raw, unbridled emotion, when drums and songs come together to create a unique buzz that sets stadiums ablaze from terrace to turf. Perhaps, the most overused examples reside in the stands of Dortmund, Liverpool and Celtic, when they belt out their highly emotive renditions of Gerry and the Pacemakers' "You'll Never Walk Alone."

Sport is unique as it can draw together disparate groups of people, who'll stand making noise either with or at one another. There's an indescribable power about it. A sense that you, and the thousands of other hapless souls who've made the effort to show up for those 90 minutes or more, can let the 22 players on the field know exactly what you think of them, and even influence the outcome. You become "the 12th man."

When fans get it right, there can be a beautifully unique and distinctly dry sense of humour to it.

Ponder for a moment those days when the team is so turgidly bad at football and the chances of them scoring are about as remote as Kim Kardashian going a year without getting her boobs out. But then, suddenly, one inspired individual finds the impetus to summon comedy from catastrophe, and begins to chant, ironically, "LET'S PRETEND WE SCORED A GOAL! LEEEET'S PRETEND WE SCORED A GOAL!" In an instant, the crowd is reminded why they even bothered parting with their hard-earned cash to watch this useless bunch in the first place. For the enjoyment.

In recent years, I've seen a massive revival in Malaysian football fan culture, sparked almost exclusively by the rise of the Ultras Malaya. My Malay is not, shall we say, *bagus*, but from what I can tell, there doesn't appear to be the same dry sense of humour in the chanting; but what it lacks in comedy, it more than makes up for in rhythm. The fans are organised, well drilled and fiercely passionate.

They have drum sections that meet up and practise, and in contrast to the more grunt-driven chorus lines in the UK, these guys have fashioned their own distinctly Malaysian identity in the football world. It is organised, spirited, and at its best, undeniably inspiring. Admittedly, the most prominent sets of fans I've encountered belong to the most successful teams. And as we all know too well, it's easier to sing when you're winning.

Sadly, we saw the negative side to it recently, when the match against Saudi Arabia was abandoned due to crowd trouble. It's perhaps easy to say as a bystander, and probably idealistic, but surely a sprinkle of satire amid the standard sing-a-long would always be preferable to hurling chairs and throwing flairs.

t @ASTJWhitelaw

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MaHB / Humour by Kuah Jenhan

MUCH DIGGITY!

Making sense of the nonsense that is pop lyrics.

ONE OF MY FAVOURITE PEOPLE to ever hold a pen, Oscar Wilde, had this to say about music: "Music is the art which is most nigh to tears and memories." Nigh is old-skool speak for "near". I agree, but I also know that tears can be of joy and memories can be rotten. Here are some lyrics, which give me fond memories of tearing up from laughter. By the way is "diggity" a real word, or is it one of those "no one knows what it means but it's provocative" terms like many of Kanye's?

Not many are blessed with the penmanship and clarity of one Taylor Swift. In her song, "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together", she sings about how she will never ever get back together with her ex. It's direct and leaves no room for second-guessing. You see, along with the invention of the World Wide Web back in 1991, the world also came to dis-cover and love Vanessa Williams' soon-to-be Grammy-nominated song, "Save the Best for Last". The song is about a woman who likes a man who is busy loving other women, but comes back to share his dreams with her because he saved the best for last.

These days, we know it as being friendzoned. Those beautiful first two lines, "Sometimes the snow comes down in June/Sometimes the sun goes round the moon." Wait a minute. Snow in June, okay, maybe? Maybe, it's not the US, but Australia has winter in June! So maybe Australia? But the sun going around the moon? How about never, Vanessa? Never ever, ever.

It's the noughties, now addicted to the WWW, we worry about the Y2K bug, rise of the ma-chines and Avril Lavigne's spelling. "Sk8er Boi," an actual title of the song that landed her on the walls of teen boys (me too), is cool-skool speak for "skater boy". She sings, "He was a boy/She was a girl/Can I make it anymore obvious?/He was a punk/She did ballet/ What more can I say?" First answer no; second answer nothing. Still better than Timba-land's "The Way I Are". Six writers on that song and yet no one corrected his grammar. I are in disbelief!

Then OneRepublic teamed up with the one grammar-badger, Timbaland, and released Gram-



my-nominated "Apologise". Who can forget our shaky sharp falsettos as we sang along? "I loved you like a fire red, now it's turning blue." Sorry OneRepublic, but fire is hot-test at the core, which is blue. SCIENCE BURN!

Today, where Y2K (and B2K) is a thing of the past, we are more connected than ever. However, challenging the World Wide Web for world wide recognition is Mr Worldwide himself, Pitbull. Where do I even begin? I remember so many of his lyrics, but then again that's why they're also worldwide hits. Epic lines like, "I got a girl in the bathroom acting a monkey while I play with her baboon and I throw 'em back like a boomerang, you buffoon", and "Mommy got a boom bang bing bang ding dang, no digga dee, no doubt, I'ma hit that." Since this song, "Boomerang", I have scoured high and low, from Daiso to Isetan, looking to purchase a boom bang bing bang ding dang, but only found one-third of it. Hey, if Pitbull wants it, I want it too.

While I eat my Ding Dang, I am left here wondering. Who could ever replace Pitbull? For these legends only appear once in a blue moon. Come to think of it, I rather wish they ap-peared whenever the sun goes round the moon!

t @kuahjenhan

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QC ON THE QT

If music be the food of love, play on... because sorry guys, we've gone celibate this month.



THE PARTY SEASON IS COMING, and yes, there is more to life than parties. There are afterparties. (I may have borrowed the phrase from a rave T-shirt somewhere, but hey, it works.) The best after-parties in true Gatsby style are the ones you really want to be invited to, and when you do go, there are a few rules to follow. First, if you want to host an after-party, then guest quality control is the top priority, apart from the music selection naturally. I mean have you ever been invited to an after-party where all of a sudden you feel like you're in your own version of Paranormal Activity? Well, some parties can get weird like that. Always remember: if you don't want to take out the trash, don't bring rubbish home.

An excellent after-party playlist is essential to ensure the continuation of a good flow of activities. Music can make or break you. If you have a DJ friend, that's an extra bonus to guarantee a good mix. But if it's not your party, the most taboo thing to do is changing the music selection without the host's consent. The golden rule is to never, ever change the host's genre of music, because you'll have 30 people looking at you like they are going castrate you.

There was incident when a fellow actor friend of mine asked the DJ to stop spinning, so that he could play songs from his own musical for everyone to hear. I immediately wanted to just disown him. I think everyone was so shocked and they humoured him with one song, but then the host (who happened to be his girlfriend) had to pull him aside politely and explain the RULES to him. Thank god, she was the host; if not, he would have been booted out along with his show tunes.

As insignificant as you may think it might be, a good playlist can actually elevate your status in the room. All it takes is for the rest of the people in the room to nod approvingly, and all of sudden you feel like you're a knight at the Kingsman table being given a pat on the back, you know, "English style".

There are no hard-and-fast rules for what type of music needs to be played, but most enjoy house in every aspect of the word: funky, vocal, progressive, trance, sexy. However, old skool R&B tunes will definitely bring some bump and grind to the dance floor. If you can tolerate a little intoxicated singing, nothing beats a mashup of retro hits, and if the Spice Girls and Backstreet Boys are in the mix, you can be sure there will be enough people willing to get on board the memory train. However, all it takes to kill the buzz would be some 23-year-old going, "So is this like really before my time?" Again, QC the people at the party. Whatever the genre, it really doesn't matter. Just ensure that you are not the buzzkill because that could wind up getting you on that other list entitled Do Not Ever Invite Again. 19

t @joannekam

EVERETT COLLECTION ESQUIRE NOVEMBER 2015 65

Radzi Jasni

Owner of Teenage Head Records, 38

I had a regular nine-to-five job back in Singapore, but my wife and I wanted to retire in KL and just chill. My brother advised us to keep ourselves occupied; otherwise, we'd get bored really fast. That's when I thought of opening a record store.

Our original intention was to open a proper café/record store. But we didn't have the budget for it, so we just made do with a Nescafé machine. I've tried to set up the store as a reflection of me when I collected records back then. In those days, after I got my vinyl from the store, I'd sit down and have a coffee while looking through them. So at the weekend, we have tables outside the shop where people can hang out.

I've been collecting records since I was 16 or 17 years old. That's more than 20 years! I have quite a sizeable collection (about 4,000 records) so I thought why not put all of it up for sale and see how it goes? People are starting to buy a lot of vinyl, CDs and cassettes now. So far so good *lah*; it's been about one-and-a-half years now.

My collection started when I inherited a couple of vinyl records from my dad. The love of it just grew from there. At the time, few people collected vinyl because it was cheap and easy to find. But the good thing is records that were pressed back then are relatively expensive now. Oasis and Suede vinyl from almost 20 years ago are worth quite a lot now.

The whole process of pulling a vinyl record out of its sleeve, placing it on the player and putting the needle on it is quite addictive. **Collecting vinyl** is like golfing or fishing. Old Malay folks might say, "*Ada hantu ikut* (there's a ghost attached to it)," but once you start collecting, that's it; you're done for.

To start collecting vinyl, you need a decent record player with good speakers. Don't get a crappy one, but nothing expensive either. Something upwards of the RM1,000 mark like a Pro-Ject will do.

I'm not a format Nazi though; not everything must die die be in vinyl format. I still love my CDs and cassettes. Every format from vinyl to streaming has its advantages and disadvantages.

Streaming might be fast—musicians can get their stuff out there in a matter of seconds—but you can't touch it. At least with downloading, you can see the files in your computer and organise them into folders. Cassettes are cheap and sturdy. You can throw them around basically, unlike CDs or vinyl.

The wonderful thing about old records is that they have an A-side and a B-side. In older recordings, the songs are sequenced in such a way that things start off quite upbeat before slowing down. But once you hit the B-side, the tempo goes up again, and then gradually winds down. With CDs and newer formats, it's a one-way seamless feel.

Vinyl lasts a very long time. Some records from the early 1900s can still be played today. CDs, on the other hand, usually have a lifespan of 20 to 30 years.

If you were to put a gun to my head and ask me to choose one format in a radio-less world, I would pick CDs. Why? Because you can't listen to records in your car, and you can still collect and store CDs in a physical form. It's also a conversation starter, in that you can show off your collection to your friends.

Most of the second-hand records in my store belong to me. The newer ones are from Japan, Europe and the US. I try not to get filler records like The Carpenters and Lionel Richie. They're good records, but not that wow.

I think the special thing about my store is that when you buy a record and find you don't like it after all, you can bring it back and I'll put it on consignment for you. You might not recoup the full price you paid for it, but you will get something. A lot of stores in the US do the same.

All my records are in the store. I have none at home—I only listen to Lite FM now.

There are some albums that I won't sell, stuff like P Ramlee, "Terang Bulan" and other old Malay records.

Album covers with nudity are worth a lot of money. Jimmy Hendrix's *Electric Ladyland* or John Lennon and Yoko Ono's *Two Virgins* might be crap records, but they're worth a lot of money for that reason.

People who still buy vinyl can be likened to those who stream or download movies yet enjoy going to the cinema. It's for the experience. I don't want to be one of these super-hip kids, but at the same time, I don't want to be this super-grouchy uncle who goes, "Ah man, why are the kids buying vinyl? They're pushing the prices up!" I'd like to be somewhere in the middle.

Don't collect records because you know they will go up in value; collect them because you love music. 😣



Patti Smith

Musician, Writer, Artist, 69

I look at each experience talking to someone as a whole new world.

We were a lower-middle-class family, and every time we bemoaned our fate, my mother would say, "I wept because I've no shoes, and then I saw a man who had no feet." That was my mother's mantra, and it's a good one.

My father was a beautiful man. When I was a kid, his whole preoccupation was the search for the meaning of life. If a fireman came to the door, he'd invite him in and immediately engage him in some kind of philosophical discussion. Why are we here? Who put us here? What is our purpose?

Solhad a very down-to-earth, compassionate mother and a head-in-the-clouds, searching father. It was like being raised by the earth and the sky.

A lot of people think I'm going to be like a punk rocker and just tell them to go f**k themselves. I'm not like that at all. When I was young, I could be very confrontational. But that was maybe 40 years ago. So I've already done that.

When you're going up a hill on an Icelandic pony and you're about to jump over a little stream, you must completely believe in the horse and fate. Because if you show fear, you'll spook the horse and the horse may stumble. It's not being reckless. It's being unfettered by doubt. That's my definition of trust.

I like my mind, and I feared harming it. I saw some of the best minds of my generation, and some a little older than me, destroy themselves in front of my eyes. That's what kept me from the drugs and other excesses in the '70s. I said no not because I lacked courage; it's because I was self-protective. Fear can be useful.

I had a taste of fame in the late '70s through rock'n' roll. It started in Europe, not so much in the US. In Florence, we had 80,000 people come to see us in a soccer arena with no opening band. I had girls chasing me up the street, trying to cut my hair, and there were people offering themselves to me. It was kind of fun. Interesting. But it didn't contribute to any evolution. Not to my work or to my evolution as a human being, and I became very conscious of that very quickly. Very quickly.

If you walk the streets alone and you look afraid...you'll draw people to you. Those are the people who get mugged or robbed. Nothing ever happened to me. I was open, but I wasn't afraid.

Milk cost, say, eight cents. Chocolate milk cost 10 cents. Robert [Mapplethorpe, the artist and Smith's longtime companion] loved chocolate milk. We didn't have the extra two cents to buy him the chocolate milk, or if we did it would mean I couldn't get my coffee. So it was always a trade-off. We got to a point where it was either a sharpener and three pencils or a grilled-cheese sandwich we could split. Finally, I would just lift the pencils so we could eat.

Friends isn't even a good enough word.

I wrote Just Kids for Robert. I said to him, "Is there anything I can do?" We both knew he was dying. He gave me some tasks he wanted me to do, and then he said, "Will you write our story?" And I shuddered, you know, and said, "Do you really want me to?" And he said, "Yes." And I said, "Well, then I will write it." He knew I would. And he died the next day. It was quite a task, and sometimes, truthfully, I didn't feel up to it and I would shelve it. It took me 20 years to find the courage, the voice, and the energy.

lalways doubted—Am I really an artist? Robert had no doubt. He had no doubt that he was an artist, and he wanted me also to have no doubt.

Sometimes curiosity is akin to excitement. Sometimes it's just having an investigative mind.

All the people that I've lost—and I've lost a lot—I keep them with me. And it makes life that much happier. About six or seven years ago, I saw the perfect shirt for Fred, my late husband. I started paying for it before I even realized what I was doing. And then I bought it anyway. I just keep them all with me because life doesn't have to be so lonely. You know, if you shut everybody out just because they die, then what's it all for?

I'm sort of on Life Four. Until I was 20, there was my life with my family. In the '70s, it was my life with Robert but also Sam Shepard and the band. It was all the things that happened in New York. The next decade and a half was with my husband. And between '94 to 2004, I was raising my children, still going through whatever, grieving. And now my children are grown. In the last ten years, I'm a bum. I'm a happy tramp, just going where I like, on my own. I have no companion, sort of free. The difference is I usually have money in my pocket to eat. I don't have to go scarfing around for 65 cents for a sandwich.

Maybe curiosity killed the cat, but the lack of curiosity will kill us.



Giorgio Moroder

Disco pioneer, 75

I had a moustache at the height of my career. Then I didn't have one for a long time. When I returned to music, my wife said, "You have to get the moustache back." I'd prefer it without but it's not bad. There's less shaving.

I don't have any expensive hobbies. I love to do crosswords. That's about GBP2 a week. Right now I only do ones in Italian. I used to do German ones, too. I've tried some in English but they're too difficult.

If you're good at something and you have that aura of being successful, it's much easier to get the girls. Being handsome also helps. I'm probably best known for two things. One, for having co-created disco music, and two would be electronic music, which I helped to launch with "I Feel Love" [1977] with Donna Summer. "Love to Love You Baby" [1975] was the first really big electro hit. I noticed that sometimes the newspapers, magazines and the paparazzi would harass Donna. I'm happy being behind the scenes.

I love a show called Shark Tank. There are four wealthy investors and you have the chance to propose a business. I think it's called Dragons' Den in the UK. It's very interesting because you see those people trying to get the money. They always say the company's doing well and it turns out that it isn't.

I grew up in the Dolomites, in a town called Ortisei. When I was 13, I went to boarding school. I hated it. The food was bad and I had to go to mass every morning at 6:30. I probably went about 1,000 times. Terrible.

There's nothing good about ageing. I did some rollerblading about 15 years ago and tore the tendons in my shoulder, so I had surgery. Then, two years ago, I fell at home and I tore them again, and it still hurts. When you're old you have to be careful because accidents happen so fast and easily. About two months ago, I was just walking on the street and I fell and broke my finger. It's not great.

I don't hate dancing but I certainly don't like it. That's why I don't go to discotheques.

I built a 16-cylinder sports car, the Cizeta-Moroder. It was a friend of mine who had the idea. We sold about seven or eight of them. I still have the prototype. It doesn't have a speedometer but the others were fully equipped. The Sultan of Brunei bought two.

When I lived in New York, I went to Studio 54. I arrived in a limo and saw a huge queue outside. I thought, "I'm not going to stand in that line", so I sent the driver to the doorman and he got me in. Inside it was empty. The more you have to wait the better it is, kind of, so they just didn't let anybody in. It was such a disappointment—I left after half an hour.

I'm not a perfectionist. If the overall feel of a song is great then that's good enough for me.

My father was very intelligent. But like a lot of men, he had a little bit of a problem with gambling. My mother was happy—but not that happy—when I became a musician, because I'd studied to be a geometra, which is a little lower than an architect. In Italy, a geometra can design a building but no more than two storeys high. Even when I was flying my mother first class to America to visit me, she'd say, "This is great, but you should have stayed at home, worked for the city and had a steady income." I'd say, "No, no, that's not my life."

There isn't much about Italy I miss. Some friends and some food. You can get great spaghetti almost everywhere—certainly in Los Angeles. There's some stuff I can't get, like ravioli that we only have in my part of Italy. I particularly like the spinach one, with butter on top. There is a type of prosciutto called *speck* that you rarely find outside that region.

If people are on coke, and they don't want you to know, they can hide it quite well. With some of my musicians and my technicians, I never really knew. Are they snorting or not? I found out later that they would do it at night after I'd left the studio. I never tried it. I was always afraid that I'd get hooked—three of my employees back then ended up in rehab.

I bought my beautiful house back in 1979. It's in Beverly Hills and belonged to Vidal Sassoon. The real-estate guy I spoke to said that Sassoon had spent one night there. The only thing that was left was a jacket and a toothbrush. I loved the place and I had it for more than 30 years. Then I sold it. Now I think that was a mistake. Today, we rent an apartment. When you leave, you lock the door and that's it. With a house, you can lock it but it's never safe. I rented one once, went away for three days and somebody broke in and stole everything we had.

Cognac was my drink at one time. I don't like it now. Not that I'm a big drinker, but before bed I might have a vodka or two. Just plain. No ice.

I've been married for 25 years. After 15 years we really got our act together—not that we ever had a problem, but at that point you start to say, "OK, I'm nice and you're nice, so let's keep this as a nice relationship." We have so many friends who got into problems with their kids, where the kids would do drugs and they would divorce. Bitter divorces. We are lucky with our son. We're a very happy family.

When I'm DJing I always finish with "Call Me" by Blondie. It's uptempo and most of the people know it, even the young ones. I wrote that song with Debbie Harry.

I should be more outgoing and meet more with friends. I like to go out for dinner but I'm nothing like the typical Italian, where they go out and there's always 10 people. I should have a little more contact with some friends but instead I'm home with my crosswords.

There were some groups I could have produced but I didn't because I was too lazy. One was Duran Duran. I should have taken that.



A THOUSAND WORDS ON OUR CULTURE



SETTING THE SCENE

Words by Fikri Fadzil

"HONESTLY SPEAKING, you guys are one of the more optimistic people I've spoken to about the music scene in Malaysia. The others I've interviewed said it is pretty quiet and nothing much is happening," said the UK journalist as we sat down at the coffee lounge of a coloniallooking hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

I was slightly taken aback, but there was some truth to what he said. But here's the deal: over

the last decade or so. I have had the chance to work closely with various creative scenes and industries through collaborative efforts and oneoff projects. That experience has given me some insight into their inner workings, and I realise that there is a big difference between an industry and a scene, even though the medium used is similar. A scene is made up of mostly artists and passionate part-timers who work for the scene. It is driven mainly by creative expression and innovation in ideas, and contributes to the community. This culture is prevalent in all creative scenes that I have encountered in Malaysia, whether performing arts, such as theatre and dance, film, visual arts or music. An industry, on the other hand, is mainly about dollars and cents, to put it simply.

Narrowing this down further, the music world is currently going through a tremendous change in how music is consumed. Recorded music, the primary form of how music is distributed, has been liberated from its physical form, and now exists primarily on bandwidth. But unfortunately, this medium has yet to prove its effectiveness, and is only profitable to one percent of the industry. In Malaysia, this "revolution" has shaken the foundations of the music industry with low sales numbers and labels scraping by with whatever is left in outdated technologies (yes, ringtone sales).

But unlike the Malaysian music industry, the Malaysian music scene seems to be growing. In the last couple of years, Malaysia has seen a number of independently run live music venues and a handful of record stores catering to vinyl record collectors opening up. On the artists' front, there has been an increase in the number of independent acts touring the nation, and some even internationally. Most of the time, this is done independently and mostly self-funded.

I believe this is due to the underlying culture of the music scene and the community, with its independent mentality and "Do-It-Yourself" culture. It is an optimistic and go-getter belief that drives the musicians to keep making music, that drives independent labels to keep releasing and pressing records (digital or physical) and distributing them, that drives promoters to keep hosting live music events. I suppose that kind of optimism is infectious, and has definitely had a big impact on my views of the music scene, industry and my work life in general. But the scene is niche, and the numbers are small.

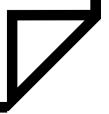
I'll side-track a little. Let's take a look at this

interesting case study of the Malay fiction and alternative book scene that has been making waves in Malaysia over the last five years or so. What started off as a niche scene of writers and poets who decided to self-publish their work has gone on to debunk the myth that physical books are a dying format being replaced by their distant digital cousins. From small stalls at arts and crafts markets to independent bookstores with nationwide distribution deals, of course, it took the Malay fiction and alternative book scene several years to reach the point it is at today, but this came to fruition with a realisation that Malay fiction readers were yearning for something more than formulaic romantic novels. There was also the investment and the support given by the government, with their "Kempen Membaca Kebangsaan" that has been running since the mid-'90s, but their recent initiative with "Baucar Buku 1Malaysia", which gave out an RM200 voucher each to 1.3 million Malaysian students, was a pivotal turning point for the scene.

I see a strong similarity between the Malay fiction/alternative book scene and the Malaysian music scene: the independent mentality and DIY culture that both scenes possess. In fact, if you look closely at all the other creative scenes in Malaysia, that is the unifying trait and culture. This is the reason why I am optimistic about the music scene and the creative scenes in general. There's an opportunity to create a new industry that is more agricultural: nurturing and handpicking ripe talent, rather than a factory-like assembly line, by manufacturing and designing talent to suit the market.

All things considered, reality still bites hard. There is still a lack of support from the government in terms of funding, development programmes and nurturing audience appreciation, and there is still an elitism that is stereotypical of the music scene. The majority of Malaysians still view Malaysian-produced works and artists as being of a lower quality compared to international artists, something that has been plaguing us since independence.

This reality keeps my optimism in check. But it is hard to ignore the potential of the music scene and creatives in our multi-racial and diverse nation, and the opportunities that can be harvested from the culture that underlines it. In an age of globalisation, I think it is high time that we started celebrating our Malaysian culture, through music and the arts. And the first step is to be optimistic. 12





BOSS' LATEST FRAGRANCE, BOSS THE SCENT, WHERE IN HIS DISARMINGLY CHARMING MANNER, HE REVEALED A LITTLE ABOUT HIS FAMILY, OFFERED WITH JAMES IN BARCELONA, IN HIS CAPACITY AS THE LEAD FOR HUGO A GLIMPSE INTO HIS CHERISHED LIFE AWAY FROM THE LIMELIGHT AND DRAWING ROOMS OF DOWNTON ABBEY TO THE DYSTOPIAN WORLD OF THE DIVERGENT SERIES FOR THEO JAMES. ESQUIRE SPENT SOME TIME IT'S BEEN A RELATIVELY SHORT SPRINT FROM THE POST-EDWARDIAN CONFIRMED HIS UTTER DISDAIN FOR SELFIES.

WORDS BY WAYNE CHEONG PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLIFF WATTS

he view from the suite affords a seemingly endless horizon, a brief distraction from the clean interior of the Extreme WOW Suite of the W Barcelona. Interestingly, behind the desk hangs an artwork—a large etching of the W Barcelona that depicts the skeleton of the hotel that I'm currently standing in, before the addition of defined glass and girders, as done by the hand of its architect, Ricardo Bofill. The W Barcelona now stands at the entrance of Barcelona's port as a silver sail (or a blade's edge), like a pushpin in a map of low buildings.

I'm just killing time. I have been told to wait while actor Theo James uses the loo. The interview with him is about his foray as Hugo Boss' latest face for Boss The Scent. The brand thought it would be fitting to hold the global launch in a location that reflects the seductive quality of the fragrance; thus, the journey to Spain. No complaints when one gets to fly to a land, where football is regarded with the same fervour as religion, where the colours of Barça FC are raised as high as the steeple of a church.

And it's a beautiful place befitting of its come-hither character. Art abounds with sculptures and installations, a city that Gaudí marked with strange natural architecture. You'd expect Barceloneta Beach to be near empty on a weekday, but surprisingly, the oldest strip of sand, Sant Sebastià, is heaving with a sizeable army of beach goers. A bleach-haired surfer leads a class of teenagers in wetsuits on how to stand on the board; a busker plays a rendition of a pop classic to a handful of picture-taking tourists; tanners in shades of pink and dark brown cook under the sun.

Despite word of a government clampdown on nudity, few are clad in bathing suits. Nudity does not discriminate; so aside from naked female forms, there is a fair share of nude men, mostly of the elderly, rotund type. As one divested fellow sleeps on his back, unbeknownst to him, a trio of female tourists stops so that one of them can cheekily position herself in the foreground and mime pinching the man's phallus as her giggling friends snap a picture. I turn away, with a mix of amusement and disquietude, before I see another *au naturel* gentleman. He is under the public shower, water cascades down on him, as he hops on one leg and examines the sole of the other. Loose skin and genitalia just flailing and jiggling and flapping...

Ah, Barcelona. The city of seduction.

A flushing sound emanates from the next room, followed by the running of the tap, before footfalls prepare me for the moment Theo James, 31, enters the room. A handshake, followed by an inquiry on whether I would like a drink (I opt for water), and we sit. I ask if he got to tour the city.

James shakes his head. "We went to the gym, but yeah, we plan to have a wander around town tonight."

He sports a scruff, the beginning of a five o'clock shade. His chestnut-co-loured hair is tousled, like he just rolled out of bed. Then there's the attire that he is in (Hugo Boss, naturally)—black like it's sewn from a shadow; his midnight blue tie hangs effortlessly from a spread collar. The combination of his outfit and cavalier grooming gives James an easy facility of nonchalance. I'm sure he has a stylist at hand, but I'm not surprised to hear either that he takes after the men in his family: his father and grandfather.

"My grandfather has a very particular sense of Greek masculinity. He believes a man should dress in a certain way. For a guy of his generation, [dressing up] is part of life. He feels that owning a situation is partly due to how you're presented, that attiring yourself reflects your own standards."

The make-up of James' golden standard is partly due to the women in his life. Growing up, his mother, grandmother and two sisters provided the bricks to his character. So, is James a feminist?

A slight crease appears between his brows. "Well, the term 'feminism' is tricky. I don't know about calling myself a feminist, but strong female archetypes are part of my life. I think equality for women has a long way to go though," he says. "This is still a patriarchal society. Look at the amount of scripts that are





male-driven and the amount of scripts with strong female roles, and you'll find it's still disproportionate.

"It's evolving the right way, but progress is still very slow."

THEO JAMES WAS FIRST EXPOSED to acting when he was cast in a school play. Throughout his teen years, James kept doing plays and short films on the side. It never manifested into anything concrete, but while he was in a production of Patrick Marber's *Closer*, a thought entered his head, that acting would be nice and gratifying if he could pursue it as a career.

It's hard not to take the following incident as purposeful. Randomness occurs often, and the confluence of being at the right place, at the right time just lends meaning to the chaos. But if Theo James had not thought to accompany his then-girlfriend to audition for a place at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, if he had not decided to audition as well, if he had not gotten in (she didn't), it's possible that he wouldn't be acting, he wouldn't be the face of Boss The Scent, he wouldn't be having this conversation with us. Who knows?

TO JAMES, ACTING IS A JOB. There's no tried-and-tested "formula" to stardom, each gig allows him to pay the bills and offers a learning experience. "The first time I stepped on to a set was for a small part in a Woody Allen film [You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger]. That was a huge learning curve"—James snaps his fingers—"from the get-go. Before that, I was used to theatre. Once you step on to a movie set, it's different."

His portfolio started to fatten up with roles like doomed Turkish diplomat Kemal Pamuk in *Downton Abbey* and a lead in the series *Golden Boy*, but what really put him on the map was clinching the role of Tobias "Four" Eaton in the *Divergent* trilogy. Adapted from the young adult books by Veronica Roth, James' presence and his much-hyped chemistry with co-star Shailene Woodley have endeared him to millions of, well, teenagers. Any actor working on a franchise film has the luxury of riding high and long in the business, but it can also typecast him or her, or worse, dull creativity.

Playing it smart, James sought out other roles between each *Divergent* flick. "Being my age, and with the relatively short experience that I have in the industry, I now know what I want to do. There's no plan; you figure things out along the way while on the job. You make mistakes, you learn from them.

"So I don't think you'll ever 'achieve it'. There's that satisfaction in always looking forward to the next thing or doing different things. But as I grow older, I know the sort of actor and person that I want to be."

James has a rich baritone voice that carries your attention along a sentence until the halt of the period. And then, sometimes, he talks with the grace of a student driver—a thought barrels through and is tripped suddenly by pauses and "uhs" before it changes track. The verbal tic isn't evident during the interview, but throughout the transcribing, it's glaring; a far cry from what I've seen of him in interviews.

Watch any video interview with James, and he comes across as earnest, thoughtful in his responses and quick with his wit. He's charming, disarmingly so. There's artistry to how he handles people, even if he doesn't know it. Yet, you can't help but think his affability is also a method by which he deflects questions that pry into his personal life. A magician's trick.

Like many celebrity interviews, we were given a list of "no-no" questions from James' management. To wit: no questions regarding Theo's personal or family relationships. No reference to Theo as a sex symbol or hunk. No questions about his relationship with his girlfriend. There will be no SELFIES [sic] with Theo.

That inherent need for privacy casts James as a sort of throwback to the Golden Age of Hollywood actors whose public image remained sterling and private life, inscrutable. "My view of masculinity ties in with aspiring more to the old-school idea of not having to share everything about yourself," James says. "Nowadays, we live in a world where we share part of ourselves through social media, and there's this strange mix of being an actor and a celebrity."

As opposed to the purposeful air of mystique that hung over the actors of

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yore, these days, it is information overload. People Instagram what they are wearing, while others tweet what they are having for breakfast. (#raisinbran #needmyfibre #bowelmovement #tmi #rofmlftwOFWGKTA)

James likens the actor role to being self-singular. You are, in a way, a salesperson, pushing a product, which is you. Now you're hired for a film or as a face for a product. You're an extension, an ambassador with established loyalties: you want people to see the film; you want people to shell out cash for the merchandise. But there's a line in the sand to your commitment. After a while, you should be able to hang up your boots, head home and be with your loved ones. Be a normal human being. Your token of self to the altar of celebrity has resulted in a blood debt paid in full. Proceed with life without fear of repercussions. Well, most of the time.

"I had a private Facebook account a while ago," James confesses, "which was useful because my siblings live all over the world. I like to be able to see their kids and keep in contact." But even with the fake names, James had to delete his account due to the tenacity of his fans trying to seek him out. "I now use WhatsApp to keep tabs on the family. It's great."

I tell him about the notes from his management, especially the kibosh on selfies. He lets out a chuckle. He struggles with diplomacy. "Uh, well, yes. Honestly, I don't want to sound too preachy because there are other people that I know who use social media. There's nothing wrong with it. It would be kind of hypocritical of me to be sitting on some kind of high horse. But if someone comes up to me and asks for a selfie, I prefer to actually talk to them."

It's not that different from American comedian Louis CK. He, too, doesn't like it when people ask for a picture with him. "That feels weird to me," CK told David Steinberg in *Inside Comedy*. "It feels odd. It doesn't feel normal. And so, I don't do it. They usually come up with a phone in their hand and say, 'I'm a big fan. Can I take a picture?' And I go, 'No, I'm not going to take a picture,' and they look shocked. Once I've established that boundary, I feel comfortable talking to them."

James agrees, preferring to "share a conversation rather than having the evidence of the meeting on a phone". "I feel that somewhat cheapens it," James says, "It doesn't mean anything. There are thousands of pictures of everyone online, so it's kinda meaningless. I want to have a conversation with you. I want to know what you're like."

If his interest in people seems contrary to how a movie star should act, it's because James subscribes to the Socratic method—not only the critical thinking and the illumination of ideas between individuals, but also how it informs his own belief structure. "Ask what you believe in, and then ask how that leads to self-reflection—I don't always do it (I mean I make mistakes all the time)—but that way of looking at life is interesting because it's a softer form of philosophical discussion."

A thought bubbles to the surface: is Theo James himself when he talks to strangers? More importantly, is the conversation that we're engaged in real?

"Conversing with you doesn't mean I'm a different person afterwards," James says. "I can hang with my friends, and then, afterwards, gear up to go to a junket. You need to put your psychological face on.

"I think you're the same person because when you're acting, you bring a bit of yourself into the role; there needs to be an element of genuineness; otherwise, people can read that."

LATER THAT SAME DAY, after a car ride up the winding roads of Montjuïc, James arrives where a crowd has gathered at the two-storey Eventos Esferic Barcelona. This is where the fragrance will be unveiled. James works the room, a skilled catch-and-release with just the right amount of allure and aloofness. He plays the role to a T, a fine cut of an ambassador for Boss The Scent.

But when we are led to dinner, James is nowhere to be found. Through the window from where I am seated, I spy him exiting the gates with his modestly sized entourage. His obligation concluded and the day finally surrendered to its night-cloaked kin, James will change into something nondescript. He'll hit Barcelona with its beguiling promises and be one of us. 12

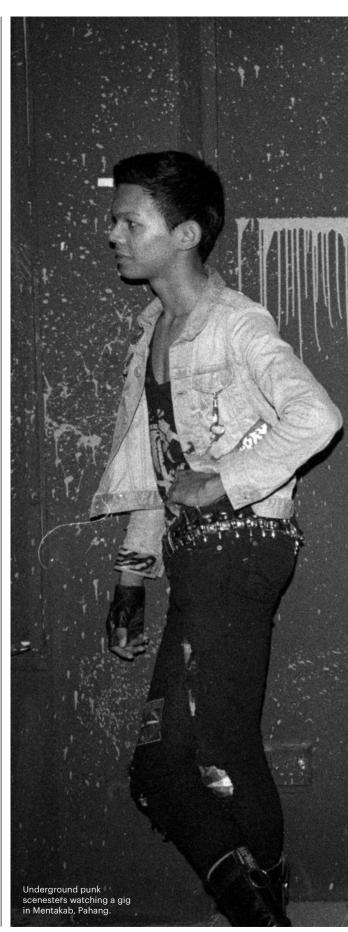


Words by **Shermian Lim**

Photography by

Paul Gadd

Most punks in the local underground music scene understand the drill. Form a band. Dress the part. Play loud music in a genre appreciated only by a niche audience. Tour the country playing small studio gigs. Get noticed for the wrong reasons. Get raided by the police on suspicion of drugs and alcohol. They might even accuse you of subversive or anti-religious activity, just to set an example. Acting on an isolated incident of alleged Quran-burning and animal sacrifice, the National Fatwa Council issued an edict in 2006 against "black metal culture", essentially a blanket denunciation of the underground punk scene. Still, the kids play on. Even in smaller East Coast towns across the country-where scrutiny of a Western-influenced lifestyle amongst predominantly Malay youth would surely be greater-the scene continues to thrive and there are more gigs than ever. What drives the punk movement there?











A singer shares his microphone with a few gig-goers.



Yon, lead singer of Mediomad getting the crowd at Elephant Army Studio pumped up with an energetic performance.

YON WANTS OFFER POLOGY

We're in Mentakab, Pahang, for Patin Ganas Vol. 1, the name of the underground music gig we both drove for several hours to attend one Saturday evening in late September. Me, from Kuala Lumpur as a spectator; Yon and his skacore band from Kuantan, Mediomad, which was going to be one of the acts. "Saya nak minta maaf atas insiden baru-baru ini," (I want to apologise for the recent incidents.) He's referring to the so-called red-shirt rally. "Bagi saya, malulah. Kita kat Kuantan, sangat against benda macam itulah." (It's embarrassing. In Kuantan, we're against things like that.) I understood the intention, but the gesture didn't seem necessary, as he wasn't personally responsible for the actions of others.

But the evening was far from being about making apologies. The gig attracted close to 100 scenesters-mostly local Mentakab kids-with quite a few dressed in ways that would make mothers cringe: spikedup hair, studded belts, black eyeliner and vests with skull patches; and, in spite of our perennially hot and humid climate, some turned up in army boots and long-sleeved, army-inspired puffed jackets. Loud music blaring through the closed windows of the studio caused heads to turn in the passing cars, a few quite clearly unnerved by the strangelyclad youth in their quiet small, quiet town, where the only other thing going on that night was a large pasar malam a few streets away. "Regular people will always judge us from appearances. Most will view us negatively," Yon muses. Mediomad's band members themselves, however, were dressed simply (t-shirt and jeans; tudung for the girls.) "Sebab kita nampak sangat. Kami lagi suka tonjolkan. This is our real self." (Because we don't hide it. We want to show who we are.)

Tonjolkan. The implication seemed to be that being unabashed about showing you're different meant you were asking for trouble. I confirm this by asking gig-goers. "Hardcore music is seen as criminal," says Din, a 25-year-old technician who is Mentakab-born but lives in KL. There was a period in the late '90s to mid 2000s when they couldn't even do a show without getting raided by the police and thrown into lockup. Being well educated and coming from a middle-class background hasn't done much to curb negative stereotypes—they've become so widespread that everyone believes them now. But fashion and music, Din asserts, is not a crime. "I'm not involved in criminal acts and I don't bother anyone. And for those of us who have been subjected to this [discrimination], we say to those people—go f**k yourself."

Interestingly enough, no one brought up religion until I did, and the response was unequivocal no matter whom I asked: a passion for underground music should have no connection to the strength of one's religious faith. In fact, I was hanging out with a subset of the underground scene-straight-edged scenesters who not only believed that gigs should have zero tolerance for racism, sexism, violence and, for

good measure, fascism, but should also be free from drugs and alcohol. When the organisers of *Patin Ganas Vol. 1* called a break during the show, it was to observe evening prayers. The underlying cause of the underground scene's publicity woes then, didn't appear to be an overzealous religious edict, but the eternal clash between new and old, local culture versus global culture—in this case, a more traditional population loyal to P Ramlee, *dangdut* and Siti Nurhaliza, failing, or perhaps refusing to understand the appeal of robust melodies and ethos of the Sex Pistols, Operation Ivy and Fugazi, to a legion of younger scenesters. Unless we become a closed-door, North Koreanlike regimented society, modern global culture is invariably picked up and interwoven into our local societal fabric. Even back in the late '70s, when the Western punk scene began creeping onto our shores.

ithout Youtube or peer-to-peer sharing, scenesters of the earlier decades got their influences from listening to the radio DJ John Peel on the BBC World Service or from friends who brought cassette tapes and magazines back after spending time abroad in places like London-dubbing and photocopying were the dissemination methods of the day. By the late '80's, a variety of genres were available, and different cliques were formed around genres: skinheads hung out with skinheads and punk rockers with punk rockers. Grindcore, industrial and trashmetal? There were audiences for those too, giving rise to a new underground punk scene that was reacting against mainstream Malay rock bands-the likes of Wings, Search, XPDC and their peers. Bands began to be more savvy in creating fanzines, setting gig dates and recording demos, most of which had "really bad quality, because we recorded them on cassette decks," said Francis Wolf, a punk rock scenester whose band Spunky Funggy had a distribution deal with EMI in the '90s and was the first local underground band to go on an independent tour outside Malaysia. "It was a different time then," Wolf recalls when we arranged to chat over coffee in Petaling Jaya. Wolf is in his early forties, sports a toneddown punk haircut and yes, he is Malay by ethnicity but won't use his real name because he's "already incriminated his family enough." Back then, Wolf remembers it was much smaller, with shows held mainly in KL and Ipoh. "Every year, there were just about two main shows. Each show would only have 8-12 acts and you were competing with 40-50 other bands from all over the country for a spot." So, proving yourself as a band with credo was how you landed gigs. You'd visit the studios of other bands and jam there, where other bands would see you play. If you were good, they might even have wanted to know who you were. Once you'd played at enough studio gigs, it was time to record a demo. Mail it off to an influential 'zine and hope for a good review. Then, you'd get your show. Now, Wolf notes that shows are a dime a dozen, but fewer people attend each gig. "The scene now feels more fragmented."

Yet, the ubiquity of gigs indicates a high level of passion and demand amongst the active scenesters. Youtube, Bandcamp, Soundcloud, Facebook and Twitter make it easy for bands to be discovered by new audiences. Cheaper methods of producing merchandise and EPs with better sound quality enable bands to be autonomous, keeping in line with the do-it-yourself principles of the underground scene. Part of the punk scene's allure is that it's empowering, but a lot of people, according to Wolf, misunderstand the spirit as much as they misunderstand the fashion and the music. They think, "We are too hard line". Wolf belongs to the generation that believes strongly that their music stands with punk ethics, and performing just "for the music" isn't always enough. "No, no," Wolf says. "If it's just for the music, then play alone lah!" There's a reason why the underground scene has guidelines—to empower those without a voice. No racism. No fascism. No sexism. Transsexual bands that would never be accepted in the mainstream. Wolf also points out the girl bands. Guys in the mainstream



EVEN IN SMALLER EAST COAST TOWNS ACROSS THE COUNTRY—WHERE SCRUTINY OF A WESTERN-INFLUENCED LIFESTYLE AMONGST PREDOMINANTLY MALAY YOUTH WOULD SURELY BE GREATER—THE SCENE CONTINUES TO THRIVE AND THERE ARE MORE GIGS THAN EVER.

Clockwise

Punk fashion: denim vests with band patches and logos; Mediomad band members at home in Kuantan with Mahaini A Hanifah, from L-R: Musmayadi Abdul Rahman, Mohd Norhakim Masod (Akim), Zulhaimi, Mariam Masod (Mayam), and Mohd Norshafiq Masod (Yon); village neighbourhoods around Kuantan.









might look at them and only think about getting laid, but a girl band in the underground scene-they'd want to know what your music is about. And the bands that write racist lyrics. "If your lyrics go against my principles, why would my band wanna play with your band?"

had been mulling over Yon's apology when I first met him in Mentakab, but now understood why he felt compelled to issue one. I went to visit him at home in Kuantan to meet with his mother the weekend after Patin Ganas. You had described her as the strict parent who went from opposing his involvement in punk, to becoming Mediomad's biggest supporter. Yon, now 30, had become drawn to the underground subculture when he was 14, where he met others who were keen to discuss issues, ideas and politics. Involvement in the underground scene has clearly been worth all the time and energy he has invested, despite opposition from his mother. His father did not seem to have strong objections, but "my mother was a real extremist back then," laughs Yon. Her stance towards his interest in the underground scene was at first an unwavering rejection. To her, this music was clearly a negative influence. "When I brought a guitar home, she'd break it." She also hated his spiked punk hair and late nights out. Yon's mother considers herself religious, but not pious. It wasn't that she thought of the music as anti-Islam, but her son was neglecting school in favour of playing gigs with his punk friends. Could he be doing drugs? She couldn't have been sure. She would have done anything to make him stop, but he just kept going.

It took Kelantanese-born Mahaini A Hanifah, a 59-year-old lecturer at a nursing school in Kuantan a good six or seven years to finally accept her son's interest in alternative music. You readily admits that in his teenage years, he was naïve about his desire to be part of a counterculture movement without fully understanding what he was trying to counter, but it informed his persistence in encouraging his mother understand that he and his friends weren't aimless youth—he wasn't just persuading her to accept skacore music, he was also trying to help her











Portraits of underground scenesters at Elephant Army Studio in Mentakab and at Darksky Lounge in Kuantan.



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SKINHEADS HUNG OUT WITH
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GRINDCORE, INDUSTRIAL AND
TRASHMETAL? THERE WERE
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understand underground philosophy. The first time she relented and came to a show was in 2008, five years after Mediomad was formed. A few hundred people attended, and that performance was a turning point for Mahaini. "I think he's fated to do it," says Mahaini. "He had no formal musical knowledge, but I saw how passionate he was about it. So I said, why not support them?" Yon's younger brother, 25-year-old Akim, plays lead guitar and when their 22-year-old sister Mayam, completed her studies, Mahaini told her that she could join the band if she wanted.

Sitting with the family at their one-storey corner home in Taman Kepadang Makmur, a housing development surrounded by zinc-roofed kampung houses and homestays, we share an early dinner of spaghetti bolognese with the family, including the band's bassist, Didi and drummer, Apek. The band is hosting a gig that night at Darksky Lounge, the name of the rented studio space that they maintain to hold gigs and practice their own material. When asked about his mother's involvement with the band, Yon acknowledges that he's happy to have her approval after years of trying, but teases her for being "kepoh" and wanting to be involved in every gig, including those that took them overseas to Indonesia and Singapore. Mahaini laughs cheerfully in response. In terms of small-town, East Coast mothers who actively support their children's underground music endeavours, Mahaini is probably one of the rare few. Yon's sister Mayam points out that Mahaini's involvement has benefitted the band. She acts like a manager, helping to book shows, making hotel arrangements for visiting foreign bands and acting as a backup in case of police raids. "The police tend to get suspicious of large gatherings. It feels more secure that she knows what we're up to. She can back us up," says Mayam.

Meeting her now, it's hard to believe that Mahaini was ever against the underground scene. Her outrage is genuine as Mayam tells me about the time when they were raided by the police at their old studio premises. Just like in the recent raids at Rumah Api in KL, authorities assumed the worst. "The police brought their Black Maria and hauled

THERE'S A REASON WHY
THE UNDERGROUND SCENE
HAS GUIDELINES—TO
EMPOWER THOSE WITHOUT
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FASCISM; NO SEXISM.

Clockwise

Mahaini A Hanifah cooks an early meal for her children, Yon, Akim and Mayam before they leave for the evening to host a studio gig at Darksky Lounge; Zulhaimi (Apek) is Mediomad's drummer; Mahaini serves spaghetti for dinner; Yon explains how he pretended not to listen to his mother during the early days of playing skacore music; Mayam hangs out in the kitchen with one of her cats.











everyone off to get urine tests. Guess what? Everyone passed, which shocked the police, who thought we were doing drugs. My brother negotiated to have the police send us all home, after the inconvenience we endured." Relatives have questioned why Mahaini lets them "do this music", and she simply tells them it's their passion; their hobby. "To say that it's anything but a hobby is difficult," says Yon. "It's definitely not a business—we have our day jobs and not many people would listen to heavy underground music. But for those who enjoy our music, it's an honour to perform for them. I've been involved in the scene for 16 years, and who knows where this will go? Maybe when skacore becomes popular, then I'll stop playing."

As he says this, I'm transported back to the weekend in Mentakab, watching Mediomad strut their stuff to a fervent audience. Up until now, the guys have been moving to an underground sequence; arms flailing upwards, legs in a skiing motion—less pogo and more whirling dervish. When Mediomad begins their set, a group of scenesters link arms in a line and step forward till they are face-to-face with the band. Yon scream-sings into his mic, sharing the spotlight with the linkedarmed gig-goers. Two ceiling fans are spinning at top speed, but it's not enough to quell the damp, sweaty stench from the predominantly male audience in the studio. The three girls present just stand by with arms folded and backs against the wall; there's a fourth one sitting in the corner, her year-old baby boy miraculously not crying as he clings to her.

Then there's us; me, awkwardly standing in front of the refrigerator full of mineral water and grape juice boxes, and the freelance photographer, who is English, taking shots of gig-goers. The two of us stand out like sore thumbs in this crowd, but no one's really paying us any attention—they're just jamming to the music. And it's all right. 18



A WOMAN WE LOVE

•

There is only one woman who could get away with being cast as a Bond girl at 51. This jaw-dropping Italian is every guy's fantasy, and director Sam Mendes knows it. That's why he asked her to star in the newest Bond film.

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Interview by Luis Meyer Photography by Cliff Watts Styling by Crystal McClory **NO ONE** likes to be kept waiting for a meeting, but things are different if the meeting involves Monica Bellucci. In that case, you're actually lucky to spend four hours at the coffee shop inside Pinewood Studios, an hour away from London, nibbling on a rancid sausage sandwich and sipping on bland coffee in the most British of ways, but with a big smile on your face.

The phone conversation I held with my editor went as follows:

Editor: Remember that interview I told you about? We've got to do it now. Can you fly to the UK right now? **Me:** Um, huh. [*In my head, I was thinking about all I had to do in Madrid that week*] Is this for real?

Editor: It's not just *any* interview. It's with Monica Bellucci.

Me: Oh, oh, oooh! [Note the change in tone and meaning: my head was slowly forgetting about Madrid.] What time did you say I had to be at the airport?

Pinewood Studios is, in a way, Europe's Hollywood. Thousands of major international films have been produced here, starting in the 1930s, such as *Superman*, *The Day of the Jackal, Alien*, and some of the films from the *Harry Potter* saga. However, they are mostly known for producing the most famous James Bond films. Their hallways have seen the likes of Sean Connery, Roger Moore, Pierce Brosnan, and, of course, Daniel Craig, the latest actor to play the secret spy in service of Her Majesty.

Pinewood has Europe's biggest set (it couldn't be otherwise), which bears the iconic name "007." Several scenes from *Spectre*—the newest in the Bond saga, which will premiere soon—have been filmed here over the course of this past year. The director is Sam Mendes (who also directed *American Beauty* and *Skyfall*, the most recent Bond movie), and starring in it are Daniel Craig and Monica Bellucci in her first role as a Bond girl. Bellucci's casting has not been without controversy.

"When I was offered a part in the film, I immediately thought that I would be cast as M, the head of the MI6 Secret Intelligence Service, normally played by the great Judi Dench," Bellucci has said repeatedly to the media. Bellucci is perhaps one of the world's most beautiful women (though I'd comfortably omit the "perhaps" part) and has just turned 51.

I think about all of this at the coffee shop while the actress finishes up a photo shoot just feet away from the room where I'm sitting, so that we can get started with our in-



terview. I am also going over my notes in my head. After all, what *can* you ask a woman who has been revered by so many men for so long, but from the imaginary ivory tower where actresses like her usually live? How do you interview someone who does not exist?

"Photo shoot is over—she'll meet you at Kubrick's building," her agent tells me as he cuts off my train of thought. He apologises for the four-hour wait, but as we walk along, I think to myself that those hours may have well been my life's best time investment. The room where you'd normally expect to meet a living myth had nothing to do with the place I was taken to: an area with a plywood desk holding a laptop, a circular table with four chairs, and a couch.

Bellucci arrives a few minutes later. She still has some of the makeup from the photo shoot and is wearing a light print dress, maybe a little too much for the rainy days in this part of England, even though it's mid-July. She greets me cheerfully, brings over one of the chairs to sit on, and gestures at me to sit down as well.

"When you're young, beauty is a given; it's biological. But ageing uncovers another type of beauty."

"How was the photo shoot?" A good icebreaker, although it's pretty evident that on the inside I'm begging to be pinched so I know it's not a dream. "It went very well," she says confidently. "They're great photos. It was worth it," she adds. Her smile is sincere. I overcome my blushing and decide to become a journalist rather than a mesmerised fan, because that's what I'm here for. And I go all out.

"In terms of age, you are the oldest Bond girl ever," I say. "The movies about Agent 007 have starred Rosamund Pike, Ursula Andress, Halle Berry, Eva Green-all great actresses I admire very much," replies Bellucci. "They're all warriors. There was no reason for me to refuse the part. It's true that this is the first time they've chosen a middle-aged woman, but that is a positive message in and of itself. We're telling women who stop feeling desirable or attractive after 50 that the world doesn't end at that age. As a society, this is nothing but a cliché we buy into, and that's not the case at all. That's not reality. As women make gains in the world of film, we have to start showing that it's not only about our looks. As you age, you enter a whole new realm of possibilities, and you can play new characters. When you're young beauty is a given; it's biological. But ageing uncovers another type of beauty. When you're young you don't realise this, because the way you look outside tends to hide your inner beauty. But as you age and continue acting, it stops being central. It is then that the rest of your beauty comes to light."

She leans forward and starts discussing her character, Lucia, as if she were an old acquaintance: "I play Lucia, the Italian widow of a mobster. She is full of secrets. When she first meets Bond, she is initially mistrusting, because she belongs to a world where men exercise power very brutally. But as soon as she is able to let go of her old ways, she realises the power she possesses as a woman. It is not until then that they start to understand each other. He saves her from her dangerous surroundings, and she, in turn, provides valuable information. Their only choice is to be civil and to trust each other. I suppose this could be a metaphor for real life..." She chuckles as she finishes the sentence.

I cannot but think (even if tangentially) that she's referencing her relationship with actor Vincent Cassel, whom she divorced two years ago after 14 years of marriage, and with whom she has two daughters. "We get along well." That's all she says about him, focusing instead on her new life as a single woman. She accentuates the word "new."

"This is a sweet moment for me. Being pregnant at 45 was wonderful. I'm also in a very good place professionally, because I've had the opportunity to work with several major directors. My last three films have been directed by Emir Kusturica, Sam Mendes, and Guy Édoin, and I've

played three very different characters, three very different women."

She's just worked, almost concurrently, with a British director, a Serbian, and a Canadian. It seems that remaining in the world of Hollywood's rom-coms and walking through a big Malibu mansion exclusively is not her thing at all: She can ace *Matrix* as well as a low-budget European film. I then ask her if she is more comfortable with big productions rather than *cinéma d'auteur*, to which she responds in a serious tone: "When I'm in front of a camera, no matter if it's an independent and

commercially negligible film like *Irreversible* or a big film like James Bond, my involvement with the character does not change at all. When I act, I don't tell myself, 'Oh, God, this is a major international production.' That cannot impact your acting, and if it does, then it's a big mistake."

Her take on fame is similar. For instance, she doesn't mind supporting roles. "When I was in Rebecca Miller's The Private Lives of Pippa Lee, I appeared for only 10 minutes, but it's been among the best roles in my life. It is not about the centrality of your role or the film's budget but about the emotion that comes with interpreting a character. I always try to reflect a little bit of me in my characters. Typically, when actresses decide on a script, we're looking beyond the film. We're looking to embody someone who speaks to ourselves or to our concerns. In Spectre, Lucia belongs to an older generation, a violent world dominated by men that she doesn't know how to escape. She is a conservative woman who needs a man to save her and to express herself. The other woman in the film, Madeleine [Léa Seydoux], is her complete opposite: independent, proactive, and able to contain men. And the past is the best way to learn about the future. We're each other's alter egos, and that helps us understand each other as women and as human beings. Both are remarkably different but bring a lot of character and personality to this new Bond film."

"And what do you think about this relatively new James Bond? What would you tell those who think that the best time for this character was Sean Connery's?" "Oh, he's much more interesting now," she says convincingly. "The former agent, a perfect hero with a license to kill and no

filters, was an attractive character at the time. But he's evolved into a more dangerous, unpredictable, and obscure human being: a conflicted man who is always in search of something. He is more complex and, consequently, more modern and mysterious."

I ask if that has anything to do with four-years-younger Daniel Craig, the most violent yet *normal* Bond in the franchise's history. She chuckles. "His tough-guy aspect can take you by surprise. He was incredibly kind and protective of me during the shooting. When you have to do intimate or otherwise very risqué scenes with actors you don't know well, it can be an uncomfortable experience for both parties. But Daniel made everything easy. He is a great actor and a great person. And that made those parts of the shooting go smoothly."

At this point, I just remain silent. She keeps boldly looking at me, almost as if saying "I dare you" through her eyes. It then occurs to me—maybe ridiculously—that she might be reading my mind. Or that she knows what I'll ask her next: the only question mark I have on my notebook,

because I don't know if I'll get to ask it. We've only barely talked about the sex scenes. And she's mentioned the movie *Irreversible*, where she played a rape victim abused in one of the cruelest and most realistic ways the silver screen has ever seen.

I tell her that I was only able to see that film once because I could never bring myself to go through the ordeal of reliving that traumatic scene. I suggest that the actor who played the rapist was surely a nice and likable fellow, but obviously that's not what 99% of the spectators think, because I'm sure we all felt like killing him. She replies that she hasn't seen herself in that scene

again but for other reasons: "I normally don't review my movies more than once. I must admit that shooting *Irreversible* was a very intense experience. It posed an interesting challenge for me as an actress because there was a lot of improvising and long scenes. In a way it was like a play at the theater, because the movie is made of sequence shots; we would shoot up to 20 minutes nonstop. I never saw anything like that.

"At the same time, though, I don't think I'd do something as violent again. Gaspar Noé is incredible to work with, and he is very personable, even when shooting particularly charged scenes, but I have to say that doing a movie like that does leave you exhausted. It was also a different period of my life. I would always choose to play more obscure characters, like in *The Passion of the Christ, Malèna, Dobermann...* The characters I choose currently are all different, but they all somehow stray away from darkness and head toward light. That's what I choose to play now, because that's what I feel identified with. My two girls are the light of my life. I've always thought that actors make decisions depending on how they are feeling at the moment. At least that's always been the case with me."

Perhaps that rationality comes from a very human side in her genes: Her mother was a painter and her father a businessman. I note that she's played some incredibly assorted roles, and that they've all been a good fit (just try to name a bad movie in all of Bellucci's career). I want to know if she inherited her mother's visceral side and her father's pragmatism.

"I've always had a very sensitive side and a very rational one. And I'm always trying to find some balance. I guess I did get that from my parents. My sensitive side tries to connect me with the experiences and emotions that come with what I do. It's therapeutic and cathartic, and I use it whenever I need to let things out. The other side, well, it's what keeps me grounded when I make decisions."

We only have a few minutes left, and they're slipping through my fingers, ungraspable like a handful of sand. I'd like to spend the rest of my life talking to her. Or, better still, remain quiet, just listening to her voice, at once melodic and stern. Or getting lost in her eyes. I tell her that if I were a judge and she a lawyer, I would clearly pardon all of her clients. She laughs.

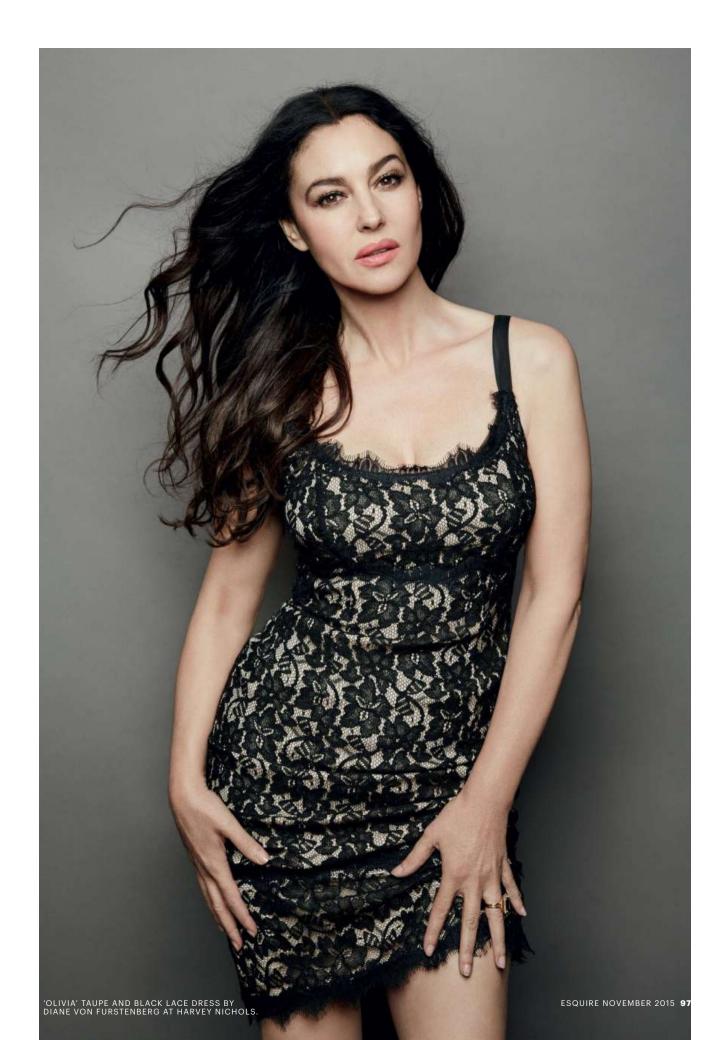
"I actually went to law school for a bit, but I was very young and realised it wasn't my passion. When I started university, I thought, 'Why not?' While I studied, I did some

"I've always had a very sensitive side and a very rational one. And I'm always trying to find some balance."

modeling on the side to make a little extra. But I always had more work as a model, and I had to abandon my studies. I was young; I wanted to travel and know the world. Being a model would allow me to do that, and law school meant staying put and reading all day long. Not that I don't like reading—I read quite a lot these days, and it's what I enjoy the most. But I am at a different point in my life. What I wanted back then was to have lots of different experiences."

I tell her that I've read interviews where she claims that acting is what fulfills her the most. She begs to differ: "There is a time for everything. When I modeled, I was lucky to work with great photographers like Helmut Newton, so it would be absurd to say that I regret something like that. It was a great time of my life. It gave me a lot and made me who I am today. It was interesting because I got to travel a lot, and it also had its artistic side, because I had an excellent rapport with all the photographers. But then I made it into acting, and that has been my field, of course."

The interview is over. She shakes my hand and says goodbye while still looking at me. I tilt my head a little and notice her skin: pale yet bright and alive. And her blackest eyes, where I get lost one more time. It seems only natural that she's been the first woman over 50 to be chosen as a Bond girl. She embodies impossibility: Her age is not a mystery because she doesn't hide it. Instead she enjoys it and shows it with pride. It's also very evident that she is the most beautiful woman I have ever seen.



Esquire meets three top Asian chefs who are conquering the world with reimagined Asian flavours.

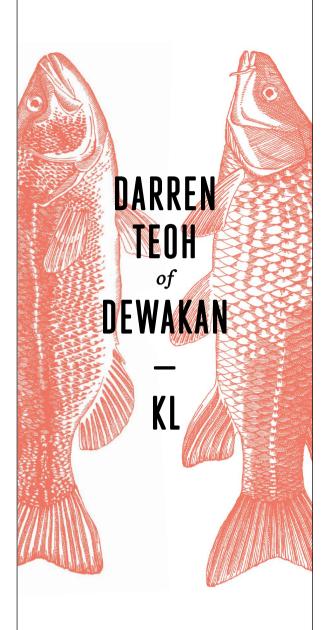
Words by Fay Khoo, Kean Wong, John Krich and Kam Raslan

Asian flavours and Asian chefs have journeyed around and then conquered the world, fusing and/or confusing their food along the way. For hopeful young chefs the travelling has been to gain apprenticeships at celebrated restaurants in Spain, Copenhagen, New Delhi or New York where they have been exposed to the latest food innovations as well as the peculiarities of local palates and local customer expectations. For some the travelling has been to meet the challenge of opening a restaurant amid the high rents of, say, New York and to introduce Malaysian cuisines to a wary customer for whom rendang tok may sound more like a painful tropical disease than an astonishing delicacy. And for some the travelling has involved returning home to reacquaint jaded Asians with their own taste textures, to make afresh the powerful Malaysian, Thai and Indian flavours in new and exciting ways and to hopefully re-remind people of the home they have not left, but which has perhaps left them.

In this feature story we meet three Asian chefs at the top of their game. A Malaysian chef, Darren Teoh, who sharpened his craft in Copenhagen's Noma (AKA, "best restaurant in the world") and who is now making waves at KL's Dewakan where he and his students are revolutionising familiar Malaysian flavours. An Indian chef in New York who has won a coveted Michelin Gold Star for his Malaysian restaurant (the only Malaysian restaurant to have done so in America), and who talks about his sometimes strange sounding dishes and the business of staying afloat in one of the world's most competitive markets. And finally, another Indian chef, Gaggan Anand, who gained his apprenticeship at Catalonia's el Bulli (AKA, "best restaurant in the world") and whose eponymous restaurant in Bangkok has recently won the prize for the best restaurant in Asia (San Pellegrino World's Best Restaurant 2015) and who is therefore being unofficially hailed as the world's best Indian chef.

But first, a word of warning before you jump into Esquire's *menu degustation*: Do not read this on an empty stomach.—*Kam Raslan*





The most earth-shaking revolutions don't always happen amid the thunder of war, but, rather, through change insinuating itself so subtly and yet indelibly that when the new era dawns, it can feel like a long-established fact.

And so it is with Dewakan of Kuala Lumpur, and Darren Teoh. His gastronomic history didn't begin with the establishment of the now much-heralded restaurant that he set up and helms with his students at the KDU campus. Neither did it begin when he launched his constructively anarchic Food Cuisine Riot, which uses molecular gastronomy techniques to experiment with and create unique dishes for special events. You would even be hard-pressed to link the provenance of his life as a chef to his longstanding commitment to lecturing students on the history of Malaysian cuisine at KDU. Rather, it traces back much further, to his childhood, before he went on to become a stagiaire at Copenhagen's Noma-to which his current culinary inspirations have a direct and tangible lineage-to a time of family and history, two key el-

Right Steamed pomfret over turmeric leaf. chrysanthemum garland, water chestnut, salted egg yolk, sweet potato



ements that have arguably been most instrumental in the germination of the seed that is today the embodiment of all that is hopeful and good about Malaysian cuisine.

As with most Asian families, Teoh's gustatory journey began with his grandmother, who "no matter the inconvenience, found joy in hosting so many people in the small house that we shared". It was the spirit of nurturing loved ones, but more importantly, understanding the pertinence of the history from which we all spring that has informed his culinary evolution, as has been the case for many great chefs. Treading the lonely path of the non-conformist, Teoh doesn't suffer fools gladly, if at all, and is often misconceived as trenchant or obtuse because of this very refusal to accept compromised ideals. But because his pursuit isn't for popularity, Teoh is rather more preoccupied with the future of dining in Malaysia, believing that "if we continue to consume the way that we do, we will find that much of what makes our food culture unique will eventually fade and die".

Enter Dewakan. And because without the one, there cannot be the other, Dewakan's existence today is invariably linked to Teoh's myriad roles: as lecturer, mentor and gastronomic explorer forging new frontiers, all of which have collectively culminated in the unprecedented launching of a restaurant on a college campus that is primarily used as a culinary incubatory lab of sorts, while also serving world-class cuisine to guests. The raison d'être is simple: to forge, with his team, a modern Malaysian culinary identity that has hitherto not existed. And the establishment of such an identity goes far beyond the boundaries of a restaurant kitchen, because for Teoh, success is measured not merely by accolades from critics and peers, but by the survival and the success of the local





producers whom he supports, and the knowledge that imitation is the best form of flattery, not least because it generates a groundswell that, with enough momentum, will become the status quo.

"We have spent so much of our resources chasing alien food cultures that much of our own is neglected. Dewakan's focus is a modern Malaysian cuisine. We intend to create a micro-environment of a business that can sustain itself on high-quality local produce. That is the future we want to see ourselves in, so much of our effort is geared towards that. Guests come for our 10-course tasting menu and get excited because of how we use our indigenous herbs, buah keluak and pomfret. I believe that excitement is contagious. We will consider ourselves a success when there are more restaurants imitating what we do. This will translate to a decision for more quality produce and give business to farmers, fishermen or growers."

Therefore, a degustation menu at Dewakan that has understandably generated considerable excitement showcases modern culinary techniques and a panoply of local ingredients to produce food that is restrained and nuanced, but definitely on the money where flavours, textures, theatre and visual aesthetics are concerned. The food from Dewakan's kitchen is a masterclass of what can be achieved when boundaries are pushed, not gratuitously, but thoughtfully, so that the result is always considerably better than the precedent.

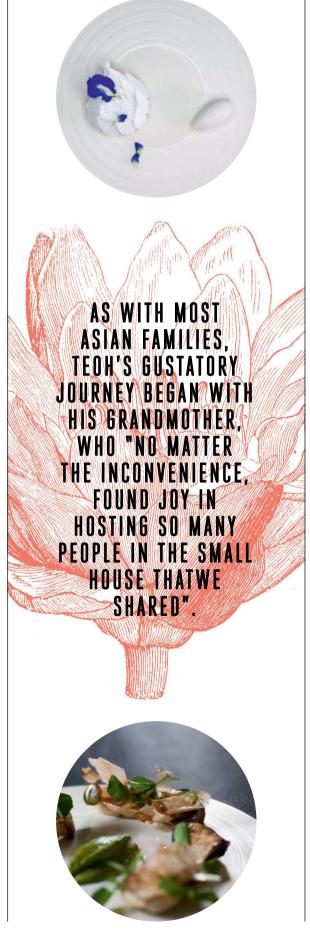
Example: Teoh's forbidden rice porridge. Arguably the standout dish of the menu, it is understated yet a quietly spectacular visual treat, and encompasses flavours that are simultaneously voluminous yet muted. Roots are brewed with a mushroom broth in a coffee siphon to extract the essence of the vegetables. Then the broth is poured, steaming hot, over a tousle of black rice, quivering soft-boiled egg yolk and ox-tongue slices for a taste sensation that is utterly seductive and mesmerising. It is a dish, Teoh says, that best represents him, and which could be "plonked into a coffeeshop somewhere. It is complex in flavour and technique. It is theatrical but visually simple. I think I am like that, but maybe not as tasty".

"I have introverted tendencies, which are often reflected in my cooking, which struggles with my liking for loud garishness," he continues. "So as far as my craft goes, dishes that we serve in Dewakan also have these theatrical aspects with small nuances that not all guests pick up on. I enjoy simple roads, but they do not necessarily have to be easy ones."

Perhaps most succinctly encapsulating this philoso-

Red prawns, prawn tartare, fiddlehead ferns, pegaga, bunga telang dressing.

Right Gula melaka marquise, sour meringue, pulut ice cream.



Right King oyster mushrooms, green curry paste, yoghurt, dried mackerel flakes

phy is the unforgettable razor clam dish. Ostensibly a riff on our ubiquitous *ais kacang* dessert, it is, on closer inspection, a complex symphony of Pulau Ketam razor clams, cashews, rose apples, *tenggek burung* herbs and "snow", served chilled, and at the onset, rather than the conclusion, of the meal. As unexpected as it is pleasing, it sets the bar for the rest of the degustation to follow.

Friends will probably describe Teoh as being thoughtful, deliberate in his movements, and unwavering in his principles; they may just as well be describing Dewakan's journey, from quietly conceived thought to actual brick and mortar. Very little about his actions are hasty or reactive, and it's easy to imagine that, having spent so many of his adult years mentoring students at KDU on the true meaning of Malaysian cuisine, Teoh would have had the luxury of time to forge his irons and lay the groundwork for the restaurant that exists today.

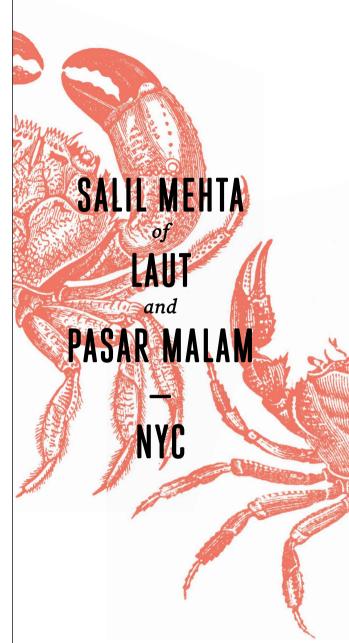
The space is expansive, minimalistic and bright, with a show kitchen in which the team can be seen quietly and calmly going about the business of preparing food. Most of them are Teoh's students, who have learned about the importance of keeping alive the legacy of the food that the local *terroir* produces. Inasmuch as he loathes labels, Teoh is also as inextricable from the framework of the team dynamic as it is impossible to exclusively credit him for the success of the restaurant.

"I am only the cook I am because of the team that I have. I think it rarely matters what you think of yourself, but what the important people around you do. The team at Dewakan embraces what I would like to do with the direction of the restaurant and they enable me to push my thoughts into realities; therefore, my strength is represented by them, and their strengths by me. As a chef, being the leadership of the restaurant, you appreciate and honour the efforts and the results that your team strives to deliver day in and day out."

And yet, by his very creativity and capacity to produce food that is as considerate of the environment as it is satiating to the palate, Teoh has already set himself apart from his peers. His may be the beat of a different drummer, but it's a beat that has resonated with the dining public, who are now sitting up and acknowledging that it's time, it's high time indeed, that we take pride in creating a modern Malaysian gastronomic tradition that is uniquely and incontrovertibly our own. And it would seem that by virtue of his consummate and innate understanding of what is needed to be achieved in order to get there, Teoh is our man for this gargantuan, but by no means, insurmountable task. In his own words:

"I think it would be pompous of us to say that we are at any pinnacle. There have been trailblazers before us who have made headway in order for Dewakan to exist. So very honestly, I would say that we are seedlings. But we are very hungry seedlings. I try not to compare myself to others or fit ourselves into a specific box, not because we are super anti-mainstream, but more because that is a question that we don't have an answer for yet.

"In the future, we hope to be one of the successful restaurants around the world, not just because of the food and service that we deliver, but also to be thought leaders in the industry, and proponents of a cuisine that produces food that is more thoughtful, and which affects the way our country eats."—Fay Khoov



Soon after meeting Salil Mehta, it's easy to wonder at his detailed appreciation of Malaysian cuisine and his experience as a restaurateur. Between running the only Malaysian restaurant ever to have won a Michelin star in the US, while keeping the plates aloft at another door recently opened across town, he's also been juggling parenting duties and his wife Stacey's family medical emergencies—all at the height of the busy summer season.

He's tired but surprisingly unruffled tonight. He's an enthused and articulate advocate for Peranakan/Nyonya-influenced cuisine in the US. Thankfully for his business, it's also a taste that has recently become more fashionable for the often-jaded palates of New York. Yet, he only bought into his first restaurant, Laut, a little over four years ago, and his latest "baby", the Pasar Malam diner in Brooklyn's hipsterville Williamsburg is not even a year old. Barely 30, Mehta admits he's had a steep learning curve in the restaurant business, taking the plunge at 25 with Laut, near busy Union Square in expensive midtown Manhattan.



It seems an unusual move to make for a Parsons School of Design graduate from New Delhi, who soon after graduation scored a coveted albeit junior role at Armani's Privé and couture departments. But as he soon discovered, the high-end design and fashion worlds and award-winning diners aren't so different-both require lots of stamina, a particular tenacity in fashioning unique pleasures for others and relentless attention to detail. He learnt much about restaurants-and reinforced his bias for hybrid tastes and flavours-when he married Stacey at age 21, he says. Stacey's family is a tale in itself. They still run two of New York's (and the US) rare Indian-Chinese restaurants, a legacy of her generations-old ethnic Chinese family from Calcutta's historic Chinatown. And like Armani, Mehta seems to revel in giving the classics a twist. It's apparently how you get to perk up the Michelin judges, who regularly face the thousands of dining options popping up every year in the intense, perhaps overheated bain-marie of tastes that stretch across New York's five boroughs. For Mehta, it's been ensuring that the delicate mix of flavours of assam, galangal and creaminess are right before sending dishes out to diners usually unfamiliar with Malaysian cuisine.

"I like to consistently innovate and remember the classics," he explains, in between directing his buzzing kitchen of a dozen people. It's not yet seven on this mild mid-week spring evening and the 20 tables are already filling up. There is the full complement of eight waiting tables tonight, with another four delivery chaps expecting a similarly busy night outside. "By classics, I mean American and Asian classic recipes. So it's easier for everyone to identify with what we're doing, and in that process, expose them to flavours and ingredients they would not otherwise try. For example, Laut's coconut cheesecake or coconut toddy: we make our version with fresh young coconut and Nigori sake. At Pasar Malam, we recreated oatmeal shrimp in the shape of a donut, that is shrimp and chicken mince with curry leaves, garlic and ginger and crusted with oatmeal." He continues with a fusion that might confuse a Malaysian purist: "Another would be 'Shrimp in a Sarong'. Essentially, it's shrimp in a blanket, but we add cream cheese, bacon and chilli padi. We made a Chinatown waffle, which is the same sort of pancake that you get in Chinatown at 15 pieces for a buck, but we infuse ours with coconut milk fresh from desiccated coconut, not tinned like usual."

Laut's version of the classics that thrilled the Michelin judges-who this year have knocked off Laut's

star, spreading the love instead with the "affordable quality dining" Bib Gourmand awards to Laut and four other Malaysian restaurants-include Hainanese chicken rice, assam laksa, beef rendang and roti canai, with the umami dishes like sambal much favoured in the past few years' guides. Having regularly ordered these above classics for years as well as several of Laut's desserts-with-a-twist, Michelin-star and not, I can say that the quality at Laut remains consistently good. The shift from one-star to Bib Gourmand is perhaps a reminder of how the Michelin Guide can make arbitrary decisions in favour of consolation prizes, even if nothing apparently changes.

Mehta says he's puzzled by the decision, but is mostly unfussed, having been preoccupied in getting Pasar Malam ready for last summer's prime time. But Michelin Guide recognition is useful in growing new customer traffic, especially for the hordes of tourists who descend on New York like ravenous beasts during the holiday season, guides in hand for the sweltering summer. He laments how his Thai menu of the asics such as pad Thai and green curry still bring in half the revenue for Laut. But he's happy that in Brooklyn, Pasar Malam can be "85 percent Malaysian and only 15 percent others", because of a more "adventurous" public who have taken to dessert mash-ups like his Roti S'mores—Hershey's chocolate graham crackers and toasted marshmallows on roti, anyone?

"The Michelin Guide helps us stay alive, keeps the tourist clientele coming in. And being in high-rent Union Square, we depend on the tourist traffic volume," he explains, adding that it's probably why the new entries to this year's hallowed Michelin list are mostly located off Manhattan, and in Queens and Brooklyn, where the rents are cheaper. "My rent is almost USD28,000 a month, and labour costs are rising with our two dozen people. About 35 percent of our costs are the payroll, with food costs being another 35 percent. Ideally, for a restaurant, rent should only be about four to five days of sales, so you can imagine the traffic we'd need."

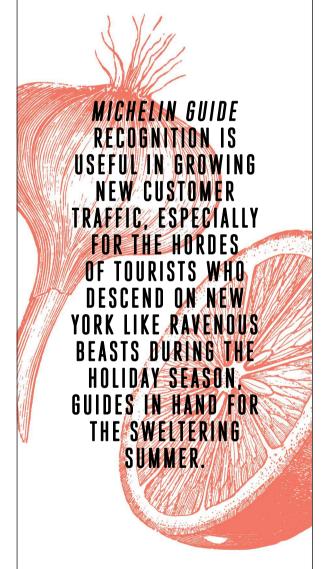
Not for the first time, Mehta's mood improves considerably as he dives into the details of how Laut and Pasar Malam tackle the "classics", with the twists done by a tasty fusing of otherwise Western ingredients. He uses both his assam laksa and pulut inti dessert as examples of how Laut aims to keep a fidelity of Malaysian tastes with the reality of New York costs: "Traditionally, the pulut's inti itself is gula Melaka, which in my experience, the Western palate hasn't yet accepted. To remove that unfamiliarity, we slow-cook the inti with coconut but add



Right Hainanese chicken rice at Pasar Malam

(Indian) jaggery, palm sugar, rock sugar. This balances out the *gula Melaka* flavour, and even changes the texture somewhat, reminding me of the flavour of betel leaf. It becomes something quite different, and suits our winter season. We have to do traditional cuisine with a twist, because what you'd consider proper Malaysian cuisine is not yet acceptable to even a New Yorker's palate."

Even as Mehta explains his hopes for his dishes he is aware of the culinary and cultural power of a certain native New Yorker. "Let's talk about *assam laksa* as it is one of [celebrity chef and Southeast Asian cuisine fan]



Anthony Bourdain's favourite dishes. Important ingredients to deliver flavour have to include fresh turmeric root—not frozen—which costs USD3 and change; galangal flower at USD3 a piece; lemongrass, which is now over USD75 for a 25-pound case; *laksa* leaf, usually very hard to source and USD20 per pound; fresh sardines; and *laifun* noodle, also hard to source. Consider also the fresh toppings and American portions that are usually a lot bigger than Asian portions, so for me one bowl of *assam laksa* can cost me about USD9." It sells for USD15 at Laut.

A prevailing challenge across New York restaurants is securing and keeping talented staff, and Mehta learnt this tough lesson early when his two lead chefs went off

ership of Laut. So how critical is continuity of staffing in the kitchen, and on the dining room floor, especially when dealing with crowds who are sampling Malaysian fare for the first time? "The staff is an extension of us on the floor and in the kitchen," he says emphatically, "so having a consistent staff is very important because it's hard to find someone who already knows about the food we serve. It takes longer to train someone as compared to a sushi restaurant. While people are okay with expensive Indian, Japanese and Chinese restaurants, higherend Malaysian and Singaporean are not yet acceptable. Finding kitchen staff who know the traditional recipes so we can innovate is even harder, and because there is such a diverse mix back in Malaysia, it's hard to determine the authenticity of some things." Mehta requires chefs with a profound knowledge of Malaysian cuisine, and although his knowledge is impressive, even he has his limits. "There were a few dishes like ayam sio that some of my chefs had never heard of. And babi pongteh. But it's the fault of the cultures because they safeguard secrets, with recipes taken to the grave."

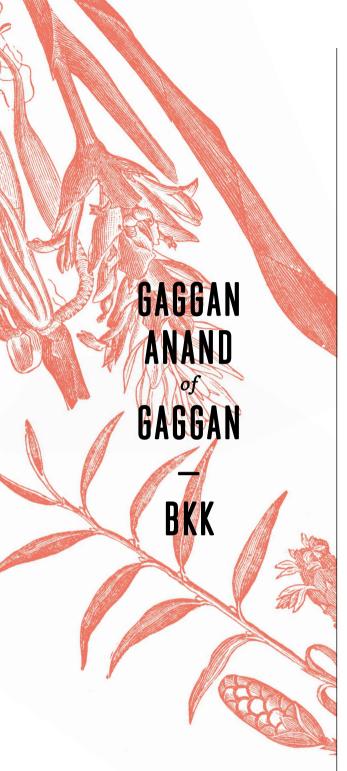
to set up their own shop barely months into his new own-

With Bourdain promising a "Singapore-style" food hall opening next year in lower Manhattan, on one of the most expensive plots of real estate on earth, this may be the best time ever for Malaysian cuisine to break out into the American mainstream of "Asia" alongside Japanese, Chinese, Indian and Thai food. "People like Bourdain are great because they are a medium to reach the masses, who tend to listen to someone from 'home' rather than explore something new on their own," Mehta says, recalling how Bourdain has been to Laut a few times, even hosting a big Singapore food festival there once. "He personally has had a lot to do with educating people and introducing them to the richness of Southeast Asian cuisine and helping them understand how unique each region is and how they have influenced each other as well. Whether the market will respond or not, time will tell. But I hope this food hall concept of his gives someone who cannot afford the high rents and labour of a restaurant an opportunity to showcase what they can do rather than giving spaces to juggernauts like Shake Shack."

In Mehta's world, he needs to keep running at summer's hectic pace until next year just to keep up with a demandingly capricious New York market. Sipping his restaurant's signature *kopi peng* over tonight's black, glistening *Hokkien mee*, he nods himself awake for the night's second sitting that's about to begin.—*Kean Wong*



Right Satay babi at Pasar Malam.



Asia's Number One Chef calls me one morning from a Manila hotel, indisposed with a bad cold and intestinal distress. He sounds hoarse and weary from weeks on the road, away from his kitchen.

Does the world ask too much of its world-class cooks? Will success spoil Gaggan Anand?

When we first met a little over four years ago, he was merely Bangkok's most engaging, accessible and original restaurant proprietor—a one-of-a-kind, zany longhaired rocker from Calcutta who had walked out of a successful life as a Taj Group chef in India to reinvent himself, and along the way, devise an entirely new category of cuisine: something we might call Hindu Molecular. Gaggan himself modestly uses the term "Pro-

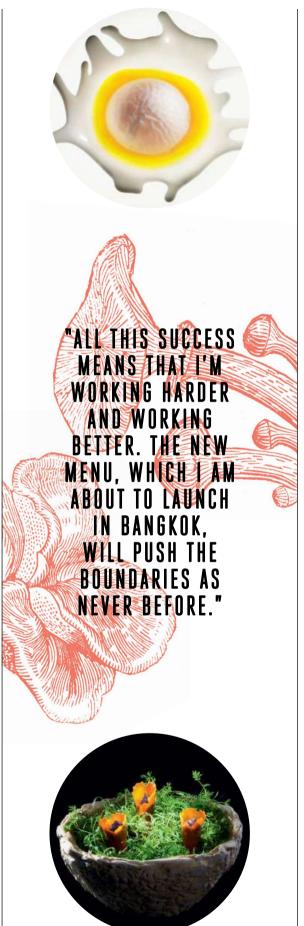


gressive," at least on his Gaggan Restaurant website. At the time, I won his eternal trust from a short review in which I called him the "Captain Kirk of cuisine—going nowhere Indian has gone before". And, except for the effort required to achieve the feat of being the first Asian to talk his way into an apprenticeship at Spain's groundbreaking elBulli, Gaggan seemingly did it without really trying—or at least trying only to be true to himself and follow his passion.

What impressed me most, even more than his fresh oyster topped with Bengali mustard ice cream or chicken tikka in intense minty foam, was his choice of a small, refurbished cottage down a Bangkok alley and his dedication to building his own style and menu without ambitions to expand or exploit his name.

But things have changed, now that he has progressed in the space of four years from the dinner where a few friends and backers urged him to start his own place as almost something of a dare to being affirmed not just at the top of the Asia list, but among the top 10 of the prestigious San Pellegrino Top 50 list. First, Gaggan's impressive tasting menu has become somewhat predictable with oft-requested "greatest hits" like his Indian street snacks in an edible plastic sack, naan bread with kaffir lime dust and gelatinous curried egg-like yogurt on a spoon. Second, he has been lured into opening a second restaurant in Mumbai sometime in 2016. In addition, he has hired a crazy Catalan mixologist to add a whimsical bar to his Bangkok dining area. He has also hit upon launching a second restaurant right across from his first, this a more popular "curry house" that he terms his version of a "comfort food gastro-pub." At the same time, while the lower-spending masses





Left Mahachanok mango mousse in coconut.

are steered in that direction, he plans to turn the upper floor of his cottage into a customised lab for further gourmet experimentation.

And he is so constantly in demand for cooking demonstrations and gourmet festivals that his hyperactivity and humour seem to have found a new outlet, or distracting detour. In today's media-driven world, the last thing a successful cook can afford to do is exactly what he should be doing—namely, staying in the anonymous shadows of his restaurant back-of-the-house. Until recently, the only demands put on chefs-in themselves, a traditionally reclusive, if not obsessively shy, lot-was to appear to greet dining guests or perhaps, if moved, produce a single cookbook to go with the restaurant in question. Leading chefs are expected not only to be celebrities, but also performers. To stay in the public eye, they have to host televised cooking shows or serve as judges on popular cooking competitions. They also need to appear on news channels as well as food networks, as Gaggan did, when he was recently asked to retrace his Culinary Journey for CNN by letting cameras into his family home back in Kolkata. Preferably, these superstar spatula-wielders need to pen a series of books and be a constant presence on social media. And once they have established a single place to hone their culinary style and hang their shingle, offers from investors start flooding in to open other branches or spin-offs in almost any corner of the globe. They who start out with an urge to spend all their waking hours putting food on the plate for discerning others end up with hardly any time to grab a snack for themselves.

Not surpisingly, Chef Gaggan has also become nearly impossible to reach—almost a month of harassing was needed to get his attention for one brief conversation. Still, his refrain seems to be: "You haven't seen anything yet." Unwilling or unable to rest on his considerable laurels, he tells me, "All this success means that I'm working harder and working better. The new menu, which I am about to launch in Bangkok, will push the boundaries as never before."

At first belittled and satirised for his spin on Indian tradition, and accused of "betraying" his country to find more freedom in easy-going Thailand, the chef now reports, "Everyone there recognises me, crowds me for autographs. Oh my God, it's too much!" While he says he has turned down slews of offers from all over the world, he couldn't help wanting to return to prove himself in his homeland, saying, "Choosing to set up a place back in India is the toughest challenge. People there really know their food, and you either make it or lose it. There's no in-between."

But he insists, "The new restaurant there will be completely different from the one in Bangkok. And it won't have my name on it. I don't want to be one of those absentee chefs whose name is on the shingle, but is never there. Even though I have a team of 48 now, helpers from all over the world, I've pledged to be there in person 200 days of the year."

For the sake of his first and most devoted fans, I hope that's a pledge he can honour. But when I ask Gaggan how people react to his cooking demonstrations, he instantly jokes, "They think I'm a much better talker than I am a cook."—John Krich 18.

LeftGajar halwa
with carrot
flowers and
black carrot
ice-cream.





THE RAP?

Marion "Suge" Knight is in jail in Los Angeles awaiting trial for murder. Once the most powerful and feared man in hip-hop, today Knight is barely a shadow of his former self. If the now desperately ill co-founder and former CEO of gangsta rap label Death Row is convicted, he will likely spend the rest of his life behind bars. At the courtroom, Esquire's US correspondent Sanjiv Bhattacharya talks to lawyers, friends, foes and family members and wonders if Suge might be a victim of his own reputation as much as circumstance. Is he really the cold-blooded thug of legend, or just a man whose hype got the better of him?



IF YOU COULD COUNT THE COST OF A MAN'S REPUTATION, FOR SUGE KNIGHT IT WOULD BE USD25 MILLION.

That's how high his bail was set for charges stemming from the incident at Tam's Burgers in Compton, Los Angeles, on January 29 this year. There are four in all: the murder of his friend Terry Carter, 55; the attempted murder of the actor Cle "Bone" Sloan, 46; plus two counts of hit and run. There's also the aggravating factor of his having been out on bail at the time (a further half million) for the separate alleged crime of stealing a paparazzo's camera last September.

There's no question that he killed Carter. The security video from Tam's car park shows Knight in his red Ford F-150 Raptor truck ploughing into Carter head-on, ragdolling his body under its wheels. But the standard bail for these charges in California is USD3.34 million. Judges may raise it if they consider the accused especially dangerous and/or a flight risk. But even mob boss John Gotti Jr's bail was only USD10 million, as Knight's attorney protested in court. In Knight's case, the flight risk is mitigated by the fact he turned himself in, and also by his fame; it's harder for celebrities to slip out of the country. So, his bail is largely a comment on the perceived danger he poses. By that token, Judge Ronald S Coen finds the former CEO of Death Row Records over twice as dangerous as the former head of the Gambino crime family.

Knight's notoriety has always preceded him. His public image is of a cigar-chomping, head-stomping, gang-affiliated thug from "Bompton", the C replaced by a Bloods-friendly B. As gangsta rap gathered pace in the early '90s, Knight became the genre's most menacing incarnation. At almost two meters tall and over 130kg, he was perfectly cast for both white suburbia's nightmares and black ghetto lore. The legends and rumours kept coming: how he hung rappers off balconies; strong-armed producers out of contracts; employed gangbangers and crooked cops; ordered beatings; carried out beatings; figured in the deaths of both Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smalls; ran Death Row like the mafia, and still today, swaggers about town, shaking people down and checking their pockets. It's an image Knight has seldom shrunk from. Rather he has revelled in it.

But the legend doesn't fit the man walking into court

on April 13, at the ninth floor of the Criminal Courts Building in downtown LA. Shuffling in from the left, his feet clanking with shackles, he looks weak, older than his 50 years, with a greying beard, thick-rimmed glasses and a limp. The preliminary hearing is the stage where the judge decides whether there's enough evidence to go to trial at all. There's only a slim chance there isn't, but still Knight's supporters are hopeful: and this is another part of the scene that doesn't fit his brand. His camp consists of one attorney, an old friend from school, and a closeknit family-his elderly parents, Maxine and Marion, two older sisters, Karen and Charlinda, and his pretty fiancée Toi-Lin Kelly. It doesn't scream organised crime. But before Knight even sits down. Karen is kicked out of court for waving. She couldn't help herself. Court is the only chance she gets to see her brother. In addition to his huge bail, Knight has also been denied all contact outside of his attorney. The fear is that he might use his family to pass messages and intimidate witnesses.

"I've never seen anything like this before," his attorney Matthew Fletcher tells me before the hearing. A gravel-voiced bulldog of a defence lawyer from Long Beach, the blue collar town south of LA, Fletcher is a charming brawler and no stranger to the words "objection: argumentative".

"They're denying him access to his support system. Trying to break his will," he says. "And it's an issue of fairness because I can't mount a proper defence without bringing in reconstructionists and investigators. They've even denied him access to his own doctor."

This last point is no minor detail. Knight's medical issues are acute. Last year, he was shot six times at the 1 Oak nightclub in West Hollywood leaving him with a blood clot on his lungs, among other complications. He has severe glaucoma: in March, he told the judge he was blind in one eye, and had 15 percent vision in the other. Then there's his diabetes which, left untreated, makes him sweat profusely and pass out. It happened once in his cell downtown, where he was found out cold on the floor. And at his bail hearing, in a dramatic moment, he collapsed over the table to gasps from his family. It wasn't the USD25 million that did it, but a lack of insulin. That was the fourth time he was removed from court for medical reasons since this case began. His risk of collapse is so high now that at a subsequent appearance (for the robbery charge), court security strapped him into a wheelchair and pushed him in like Hannibal Lecter. Fletcher described the treatment as "abject humiliation".

Big men fall hard, but Knight especially. At his height, he helmed the fastest growing hip-hop label in history. Since it launched in 1991, Death Row's sales have exceeded USD750 million, but Knight was in prison by 1996, on a five-year stretch for a parole violation (he took part in a brawl). And everything fell apart. He's since lost his fortune, his company and his credibility in the industry. He has been shot twice, sued repeatedly and knocked clean out on more than one occasion. And he has lost what public sympathy he once had. There was a time they'd march for Knight. Before he went down that first time, fans and supporters would gather outside the courthouse with "Free Suge Knight" signs. Now, there's no one, just mocking comments online, variations on the theme of "karma's a b*tch".

And yet, this time, Knight might actually deserve support. He's on his third strike, which in California means that if he's convicted of anything, he faces 30-to-life. And at this critical time, it's not clear that he's getting a fair shake. He may even be a victim, of his own hype certainly, but also of a police investigation that, at this stage, seems more determined to nail him than those who have made brazen attempts on his life—two in a period of four months.

At Tam's, for instance, Knight was clearly assaulted. The video shows that as he pulls into the parking lot, Bone attacks him, punching through an open window. (You can watch it all on *tmz.com* if you have a mind to.) It was a continuation of an argument that started earlier that day on the set of a promo video shoot for *Straight Outta Compton*, a movie about rap group NWA. Bone tries to drag Knight from the car, as other men close in, so Knight lurches his truck into reverse, knocking Bone over, and after a brief pause, steps on the gas, running over Bone's legs and crushing Terry Carter, who is approaching the front of the vehicle. The prosecution claims the pause (four seconds) is long enough to prove premeditation.

The defence claims it isn't and anyway, Knight was clearly fleeing for his life, with good reason as the rest of the video shows. Once Knight's vehicle departs, a man pulls a gun-shaped object from Bone's body on the tarmac. Furthermore, phone records indicate Terry Carter had called some of these men to Tam's, and he called Knight, too. The men are gang members and they were waiting for Knight when he arrived.

"It was an ambush!" Fletcher exclaims. "Suge was assaulted! And last I checked, if you carry out a felony and someone dies in the course of that felony, then you're guilty of felony murder. The district attorney (DA) should have charged Bone with Terry's murder. But instead, Bone got immunity. That's how badly they've got it in for Suge. Just look at the history. He's been shot, beaten up and assaulted in broad daylight, and the one thing that all those cases have in common? Not a single prosecution. It's open season on Suge Knight!"

The bail motion is Exhibit A of how the deck is stacked. It was filed by district attorney, Cynthia Barnes, a young prosecutor whose affable demeanour belies her appetite for a fight. Offering Knight's rap sheet as well as a heap of allegations spanning decades—over 300 pages in total—she warned the judge that "his past behaviour has given us a very clear message: 'I will not follow the law. I do not care about human rights. I will beat a woman. I will beat a man. I will do whatever I want'... To be honest, I do not think any bail is enough for him."

No doubt, the litany of charges paints an ugly picture, one of Knight as an extortionist collecting "debts" through threats as in this text cited in evidence: "U have kids just like me so let's play hardball you b*tch a** n*gga". The image is supported by some videos on tmz. com: Knight punching a guy outside a club (2012); Knight punching a guy at a pot shop (2014). But for the most part, Barnes' filing is just allegations in police reports, largely unsworn, anonymous and unproven. The most serious of them all, that he extorts USD30,000 per visit from outof-town rappers and athletes who come to Los Angeles, is based on a claim by a detective, Richard Biddle, that he "heard some rumours" from an anonymous source in the music industry.

Knight's legend is overwhelming him. Accusers file police reports because they're afraid, they know his reputation. The police treat their allegations seriously, because they, too, know Knight's reputation. And as the reports pile up, the DA presents it to the court as, look at this guy's reputation! Naturally, we assume that these allegations can't all be groundless, after all, where there's smoke, there must be, if not fire, then at least Big Bad Suge, puffing on a cigar, like a cartoon villain.

"It's a sad commentary on our system," Fletcher says.
"The USD25 million was based on accusations, innuendoes and urban myth. And that stuff is supposed to end at the courtroom door."

The judge looks at the clock, it's 8:40AM. The doors to the chamber are closed. There is whispering and the shuffling of papers and seats. And the first witness is called: Cle "Bone" Sloan.



Left
The BMW
that Tupac
was shot in
later the
same night.

COULDN'T TALK to Knight for this story. And none of the public figures or artists associated with him at various times would comment—Snoop Dogg, Dr Dre, Kurupt, Daz, Bobby Brown, Jodeci, Mary J Blige, DJ Quik, Warren G, Jimmy Iovine, Jerry Heller... it's a long list. Sometimes their reps would laugh and call me naive. One producer confessed he was afraid. "In Suge's world, they can touch you if they're locked up or not," he said.

But there are those who have known Knight personally for decades, business confidants, family members, the mothers of his four children. Some are in court every day, others are currently estranged and spoke to me without his blessing. But nevertheless, they all independently tell a similar story, that Knight isn't the person we read about. The thug image is a mask he once found profitable, and which gave him privacy. But now the mask has stuck and become his undoing. Suge Knight, they tell me, is neither an angel nor a demon. Yes, he has hit people, he has that in him, but he is also

a charismatic and generous soul, intelligent and flawed; more complex than you think.

"He's not a street tough, he's a wannabe," says Virgil Roberts, a former mentor to Knight from the early days of Death Row. "He created an image, but in terms of the mentality, the hardness? He doesn't have it."

Roberts was once president of Solar Records, one of the biggest soul labels of the '80s with acts like Midnight Star and Shalamar. In its early days, Death Row was based in the Solar building in Hollywood, and Knight looked to Roberts for guidance. They're still in touch.

"Suge is a black boy from Compton who went to college," he says. "That makes him one of the top two or three percent. And those kids have a lot of grit and determination. It's grit that makes you successful."

Knight came from a stable, loving home. His parents are still together, the family is close-knit. His mother Maxine worked in a factory and his father, Marion Sr, was a university janitor. "Sugar Bear", as his mother called him, was a good kid and an excellent athlete. While his friends were out selling dope, he was at Sunday school. And when he made it to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas on a football scholarship, his coach there said, "he wasn't a problem guy at all. You didn't see that street roughness in him."

Football, however, wasn't his calling: his only flirtation with the NFL was part of a strikebound season with the LA Rams. He first worked as a bouncer and then as a bodyguard for artists like Bobby Brown and later the rapper The DOC, one of the founding members of NWA. In this way, he broke into the music industry, first as a minder, then a manager, protecting his artists physically and then contractually. Part of his early fame in the industry was his ability to get artists better deals from record companies, negotiating contracts for Mary J Blige and Jodeci, among others.

Mario "Chocolate" Johnson was one of his first cli-

THERE'S NO
QUESTION
KNIGHT KILLED
TERRY CARTER.
VIDEO SHOWS
HIS TRUCK
PLOUGHING INTO
HIM HEAD-ON.

ents and remembers Knight as "real clean-cut. No cigars, no liquor, no candy bars". Johnson had written most of Vanilla Ice's first album—including the monster global hit "Ice Ice Baby"—but not been paid, so Knight stepped in. The first legend of his hard man reputation was born, the tale of him hanging Vanilla Ice off a hotel room balcony. "It never happened," says Johnson. "I was there."

The fiction started with Vanilla Ice who told the story on NBC TV, only to later admit he'd made it up. When I called him, he changed the story again: "There were a couple of white guys there with guns, kinda *Goodfellas* looking..." But the truth is mundane; a lawsuit was filed, a judgment reached. Roberts asked Knight why he didn't debunk the myth, and he said, "Why would I? It's good for my reputation!"

The second cornerstone of Knight's legend is the strong-arming of Eazy E (Eric Wright) in April 1991. Wright was the brains behind NWA and ran Ruthless Records with business partner Jerry

Heller. He'd created a multi-platinum phenomenon that was instantly iconic and enormously influential. No other group had shown the authorities the middle finger with quite such relish. But there was discontent in the ranks. Ice Cube had left in 1989, complaining about his royalties (Cube and The DOC were the group's principal lyricists), and producer Dr Dre felt he was also being ripped off by Eazy E and Heller. Dre was looking for a way out when The DOC introduced him to Knight. Soon after, Dre was recording The Chronic, his first solo album, for Knight's fledgling label Death Row. All he needed was to be freed from his Ruthless contract. According to a lawsuit Wright filed later, Knight and a bunch of goons with baseball bats held him captive in the Solar building and said if he didn't sign the release he'd be killed, and his mother, too. But as Dick Griffey, the founder of Solar Records, said in the documentary Welcome To Death Row (2001), "I wasn't there, so when E said that me and Tommy Mottola were in the room with bats and pipes, he's obviously a liar!" The matter was solved like most commercial disputes. Money was paid, Dre was released.

Then there's the story of George and Lynwood Stanley from July 1992. Lynwood was tying up the phone at Solar studios, despite Knight's orders. He pulled a gun, and forced the brothers to strip to their boxers in front of all at the studio. When they protested, Knight shot into the wall, and warned them not to go to the police, or there'd be hell to pay.

"So they walk out onto Hollywood Boulevard and stop the first police car they see," Roberts says. "I asked them later, why did you go to the cops, were you afraid? And they said, 'Nobody's afraid of Suge. He's a buster! If he didn't have the gun we would have beat his fat ass in the building."

Knight ended up with 60 months' probation, and Solar was sued for damages. If anyone had hell to pay, it wasn't the Stanley brothers. But Knight's myth kept growing, and he loved it. Roberts remembers him at his desk, puffing on a cigar, laughing, "Ah, Virgil. Isn't it great? Everyone's afraid of me!"

It was a Faustian pact. There was profit in letting these myths circulate since a little fear didn't hurt at the negotiating table, and for a gangsta rap label, a mobster image was a form of marketing. So, as Death Row exploded, and suburban white kids started throwing gang signs and talking about "indo smoke", Knight, too, embraced gangsta rap culture, the world of the kids he wasn't allowed to play with as a youngster. He became the most extreme example of how this controversial genre could lead a well-raised young man astray.

Knight went all out. Suddenly, everything in his life turned red—the colour of the Bloods—his suits, his office, the home he grew up in, the swimming pool of the Las Vegas house he bought which Martin Scorsese used for Frank Rosenthal's home in *Casino* (1995). Knight opened a Las Vegas nightclub named MOB (Money Over B**ches). He appeared on magazine covers, snarling and puffing his cigar. He menaced journalists with a piranha tank in his office. He became the face of the label.

"It was a fantasy for Suge," Roberts says. "He so wanted to be this feared mogul that he started playing that role. And you know how the hunter gets captured by the game?"

His girlfriend at the time, Stormey Ramdhan, makes a different analogy. The mother of two of his sons, now aged 19 and 12, she was with him from 1993 to 2009, his longest relationship to date. "His image is just marketing that went bad," she says. "It was like a brushfire you couldn't put out."

Of Knight's many mistakes at Death Row, the gravest of all was his decision to hire actual gang members fresh out of prison. He saw it as enhancing Death Row's street credibility while giving back to the community, but it invited in chaos and violence. Beatings were routine. Engineers remember studios being used as dog-fighting

rings. True to its name, Death Row came increasingly to resemble prison. And Knight encouraged it. By some accounts he was afraid not to. He had to keep up appearances around these thugs. But it led to the flight of his artists, the scrutiny of law enforcement, even the FBI, and ultimately, the demise of the company.

The death knell sounded when Dre stopped working at the label in 1995. The master-producer had never felt comfortable around gang members, so he stayed home. And Jimmy Iovine, at Interscope, saw the opportunity. He offered Dre a new label, Aftermath, a felon-free environment, and Dre walked. Knight saw his departure as a knife in the back. Not just because of Dre's musical talent, but because he saw him as his brother in arms. Hadn't Knight freed him from his Ruthless contract? Wasn't Death Row a dream they were building together?

For Knight, Dre's defection is a de-

THE MOST
EXTREME EXAMPLE
OF HOW THE RAP
GENRE COULD
LEAD A WELLRAISED YOUNG
MAN ASTRAY.

fining emotional scar which, say Ramdhan, Roberts and others, hurts to this day, right up to the tragedy at Tam's. There's even a woman between the two, singer Michel'le Toussaint, one of Death Row's soul acts. She was with Dre first, then Knight, bearing a child for both men. But notably, she has spoken in public about Dre beating her, while Knight was "a protector, a hugger, a gentle giant."

At the time, Knight offset the loss of Dre by signing Tupac Shakur. And 'Pac was the perfect catalyst for Death Row's last days, the dying flare of the match. Dre left because of the violence, but 'Pac was attracted by it. Like Knight, he romanticised gang culture and Knight loved him for it, calling him his little brother. But it was Tupac who put him in prison, more than anyone else. Just hours before he was shot in Las Vegas in September 1996, Tupac had started a brawl at the MGM Grand Hotel. And in footage of the mêlée, Knight is seen coming in from the edges and getting in a couple of kicks. Roberts considers those kicks as just an attempt to save face. But for the court, it was a probation violation. He was given nine years and served five.

Knight pleaded with the judge that day. He said he felt like Frankenstein. "It gave me chills," Ramdhan says. "Because that's how his life has been. He's been built up to be this monster. And now they're tearing him apart."

Prison changed him. According to Ramdhan and Knight's adopted son Danny Boy, a singer on Death Row (both of whom visited him regularly while inside at this time), incarceration made him harder and colder, more like the man he'd been pretending to be. His sense of betrayal festered: not only Dre but other artists had let him down. Snoop Dogg was now publicly blaming Knight for 'Pac's death. And accusations whirled that he was also responsible for Biggie Smalls' death in 1997, ordering the hit from inside prison. No charges have stuck in either case, but Knight's name still carries that stink.

While he stewed in prison, his company fell apart. He couldn't control it and the people he'd hired—

never his strong suit—were incompetent. Money went astray; artists were unpaid. By the time Knight got out, he had enemies everywhere, and he couldn't contain his anger. He would rant in interviews, calling out everyone who had wronged him—Jimmy Iovine, Doug Morris [ex-CEO of Universal], and above all, Dr Dre, whom he derided as a b*tch, a fag, a sissy.

"He was jealous," Ramdhan says. "Aftermath was successful and Dre still had a relationship with Jimmy, but he [Suge] had been blacklisted." Knight degenerated into the aggrieved ex-mogul who had fallen from relevance, trying desperately to recreate his prime. But his subsequent labels didn't come close. Hip-hop had moved on and Knight's peers with it: Puffy and Russell Simmons run empires; Iovine is a billionaire and Dre thereabouts (thanks to Apple buying Beats by Dre headphones for USD3 billion). But Knight is still out at night, the oldest man at the club, still



Above Suge Knight in court on a probation violation, Los Angeles, February 28, 1997.

talking about "Bompton" and real Gs, telling the *TMZ* cameras who is and who isn't a motherf**king b*tch.

THE ATTACKS STARTED at around the time Death Row fell into fiscal chaos. In 2005, it was sued successfully by one Lydia Harris, who claimed she'd co-founded the label with Knight in 1989; her award of USD107 million forced the label into bankruptcy. A few months later, Knight was shot in the leg at a Video Music Awards party hosted by Kanye West in Miami. (His thigh was shattered and replaced with a metal plate, hence his limp.) It was a crowded venue, with scores of witnesses, but no arrest was made, a pattern that has become familiar. He still has a bullet fragment in his skull since driving the car for Tupac on that fateful Vegas night in 1996. There has been no arrest in that case, either.

A further attack, in May 2008, hurt his reputation more than anything else. A barber named Greg knocked him unconscious for three minutes outside an LA night-club; pictures of him lying there were posted online. Greg became a 'hood celebrity, interviewed on YouTube, the Buster Douglas of Compton. Sources close to Knight insist he was actually hit on the back of the head with an iron bar. But still no arrest. And Knight never returned to break his legs. Some gangsta.

According to Toi-Lin Kelly, that incident opened the floodgates. The word was out: Big Bad Suge could be beaten up in public, without repercussion. And he quickly became a target, a badge for younger thugs to build their own names. A year later, Knight's jaw was broken by two members of the singer Akon's camp while leaving a club in Scottsdale, Arizona.

"It started a wave," she says. "We never have security when we go out, but I've been in so many positions where I have to talk him down. People try to provoke him."

Like Ramdhan, Kelly is an attractive, indomitable woman, only younger, at 32. She has an MBA and runs a gym in the San Fernando Valley called Mint. When we meet in her office, she's eager to set the record straight. "He doesn't go around bullying people you know," she smiles. "He doesn't drink blood for breakfast!"

The picture she paints is one of a man trying to claw his way back, and meet his responsibilities. He has four children: with Kelly, a boy of five called Legend; two boys with Ramdhan, Suge Jr (19) and Sosa (12); and a 12-year-old girl, Bailie, with Michel'le Toussaint. And money hasn't been easy. They still live in Beverly Hills, but Knight has to take consultancy gigs where he can, promoting a smoking papers brand, or making introductions in the music industry. The Malibu mansion is long gone. His hopes are set on a couple of projects about his life and times—a Showtime documentary by Southpaw director Antoine Fuqua and a book. "I can't remember the title," says Kelly. "Something like *My Pain is Your Gain. No, American Knight-mare?*"

But she really wants to talk about the shooting at 1 Oak in West Hollywood last August, an attempt on Knight's life that remains an open investigation for the LAPD, so it's hard to verify her version. If what she says is true, however, it foreshadows the incident at Tam's in a couple of key ways. In both incidents, Knight was called to a place and then attacked, and the investigating detectives in both cases—Richard Biddle and Barry Hall—appear to have detained the victim, Knight, rather than the aggressors.

It was another VMA party, hosted by Chris Brown, and Knight had been called there, Kelly says, by the comedian Katt Williams, whom he was tour managing. Already this night seems doomed, with three of the most trouble-prone celebrities in LA under one roof. Brown is infamous for assaulting former girlfriend Rihanna. Williams is reportedly bipolar and has a considerable rap sheet. It was Knight's job to keep him in line, and it wasn't working. (A month later, he and Williams would be accused of stealing a female paparazzo's camera.)

According to Kelly, Knight showed up at the club because he wanted to speak to Chris Brown anyway. A couple of days earlier, he'd heard that an associate of Brown's had ordered a hit on him, following an argument at a studio three weeks before. Knight had paid Brown a visit to offer advice about Brown's association with gangbangers, specifically the Fruit Town Bloods. Knight and Brown have been friends for a long time. But an argument erupted with this associate, and Knight is said to have hit him. Now there was a price on his head. (Sources close to Brown confirm a fight took place, but not that Brown was there, or that there was any "hit". According to insiders, the associate is apparently no longer connected to Brown.)

At 1 Oak, Knight discussed the situation with Brown. As he left his table, shots rang out. He was hit six times. Had he not turned his body to one side, he might have died.

"The cops know who did it," Kelly says. "When Suge was in hospital, they came and showed us the security video on a laptop, and it's as clear as day. They had 37 cameras in that club. You can see what people are wearing, their faces. You see everyone duck, except for two men, who are both looking for Suge, to see if he'd been hit. Then a third man runs past, takes the gun from the shooter and leaves. The cops even told us the shooter's name. And they told us later, that they found him hiding out in a high-rise downtown. They were keeping him under surveillance for 45 days and he only ever came out to go to the corner store, or to pay for delivery food. So they nabbed him one day, and asked, why are you hiding? He said, 'Oh, Suge thinks I shot him, so he might be looking for me.' And he had a gun on him. It wasn't the weapon that was used in the shooting, but he admitted to being armed that night, too, because he was working as security. The cops said, 'where's the gun?' he said, 'I don't have it anymore."

It's impossible to confirm as the LA Sheriff's Department won't comment on any ongoing investigation. But in an interview with Knight after the incident at Tam's, investigators blamed the lack of an arrest in that case on Knight's lack of co-operation—even though the shooter had been identified by name. Virgil Roberts remembers getting a call from Knight asking for money some months later. "He said he could definitely pay me back because the club was going to settle," he says. "He said you could see on the security cameras that they let the shooter in the back door." (The club and Knight's civil attorney have both refused to comment.)

So this is what Knight's attorney and family believe: the cops know who shot Knight, and they know where to find him, but still no arrest. Instead, Knight stands trial for murder. And testifying against him, is the same investigating officer, Richard Biddle.

CLE "BONE" SLOAN hobbles into court, wincing in pain. It's been 10 weeks since the carnage at Tam's where he suffered two fractured ankles, tore some ligaments and required 17 stitches in his head. But it isn't his injuries that account for what happens next. No sooner has he sworn to tell the whole truth, than he claims not to recognise Knight, sitting 4.5M from him in bright orange robes.

"I know Mr Knight, but that doesn't look like Mr Knight," he says. "It just doesn't look like the guy that was out there."

It's a game gang members play. To keep their rep, they make a show of not snitching. Knight is no different; he has often said he wouldn't tell the police who Tupac's killer was if he knew: "It's not my job. I don't get paid to solve homicides." And now Bone is singing the same tune. "I will not be forced to tell on anyone," he says. "I don't want that smell on me."

His rep on the streets may be fine, but in this courtroom it's shot. Not just because he started the fight at
Tam's and was almost certainly armed, but because he
lied to the police, repeatedly and with relish, days after
the incident. This was before he realised that a security
video would expose him. "I might have, what's the word,
embellished," he says. "Because I knew I was responsible, too, and Terry was dead. Maybe I tried to shift some
of the blame."

He wipes a tear from his eye. He's an actor. An actor and a Blood, that's his niche. He made a name in the gritty Hollywood movies *Training Day* (2001) and *End of Watch* (2012), and has since become the guy movie producers call when they need ghetto authenticity. Either as an actor or a consultant, he's the liaison between Hollywood and the 'hood. For *Straight Outta Compton*, Sloan was brought on as security to harmonise the relationship between the movie set and local gangs. He hired fellow Bloods to work with him; he involved "the community". And one of the people who joined him, was Terry Carter, an alleged gang member, who ran a car dealership.

The Hollywood movie is one of the ways that counterculture is embraced, even brought to heel, by the mainstream. Artists that scare the horses become national treasures in time. Ice Cube of "F**k tha Police" fame now stars in family comedies, and big studio pictures like *The Doors* (1991) and *Walk The Line* (2005) conferred post-humous golden status on former wildmen like Jim Morrison and Johnny Cash. But *Straight Outta Compton* is already tarnished. The tragedy at Tam's is a reminder that the world NWA revealed of Crips, Bloods and drive-bys is as extant today as ever. Only in this story, the tensions are also embodied in the characters themselves, Compton's most hallowed names, Suge Knight and Dr Dre, and also Sloan, the so-called "non-active" gangbanger who was employed to keep them apart.

It all started when Knight chose to visit the set in South Central where they were shooting a promo video for the movie. He should have stayed outta Compton. He was in Century City at the time, with Kelly and Legend, out west in the safety of "white world" as he calls it. But he had a bone to pick. His likeness had been used in the movie and he wanted to be paid. As soon as he arrived, he saw Kebo, head of Ice Cube's security. "First thing he said," says Kebo, "was, 'I come in peace. I didn't come down here to start no problems, that's why I came by myself. I want to request a meeting with Cube and it don't have to be today.' He was not out of control, he was not irate, he was not hostile."

Knight's arrival on set, however, caused a ruckus. When word reached Dre, according to Sloan's interview with police, his bodyguards went into lockdown. Kelly describes Dre as a, "really fearful person. Like our dry cleaning guy, he happened to tell Dre he delivers to us, too, and he was immediately fired, 86'ed out of the gated community and everything." (Attempts to confirm this with Dr Dre were unsuccessful.) It was Sloan's job to keep Knight away from the set. So he approached Knight's truck and the men exchanged words. A high school exchange, the way Sloan explained it: "I said, 'Man, you always acting like a bitch." He said, 'You the bitch'." And then it escalated."

There was no altercation this time. There were LA sheriffs on hand, who told Knight to leave. And he did. "He didn't resist or talk shit or crazy," says Kebo. "He just got in his truck and left." Kelly says he called her as he got on the freeway, he was coming home. But then Terry Carter called him, and it appears Knight turned around. Terry was an old friend, one of the few Knight would al-

Below Knight collapses during a court hearing, May 2015.



low around his kids. If Terry told him to go to Tam's to straighten things out, then he would go. He was alone, unarmed, and according to Fletcher, on his way into a trap.

"We know that Bone was told to handle the situation, he's testified to that," says Fletcher. "We know that Bone hired a bunch of gang members—Jimmy Chris, Knob [Dwayne Johnson] and Marv Kince. We know from phone records that Terry called a bunch of people. He called Knob twice, after Suge left the set. And Knob called him twice. And then Terry called Suge. And we know by the time Suge got there, they were all waiting for him. Knob, Jimmy Chris, Bone and Marv. Suge was going to be 'handled'".

At the hearing, Bone is evasive. "I can't recall," he says. But even so, an explanation emerges for why he was at Tam's at all, three miles from the movie set, and it's riddled with problems. He told police he made a wrong turn on his way to another film location nearby:

"We were about to move the whole company. We were setting up stunts. We had these professional riders, they was gonna be riding next to Dre, doing wheelies and shit." Bone claims he noticed Knight's truck and saw Knight talking to Terry. So he crept up on them. As he told police: "I just popped out like a jack-in-the-box. Like 'let's do it'. I opened his door. And he snatched it back. And I punched him in the face. And that's how it took off."

But the video shows that Knight was the last one there. He wasn't talking to Terry Carter at all; he pulled in and was immediately attacked by Sloan. And the wrong turn Sloan took was not one or two, but 11 blocks from the alleged filming location. Furthermore, at least three other gang members just happened to make the same wrong turn as Sloan at exactly the same time. And if they were at the wrong location, why did they get out of their cars and hang around until Knight arrived? Had a hit been ordered on Suge Knight?

But perhaps most damning of all is the account that Marv Kince, one of the men at the scene, gave to police in his interview. He maintained Knight didn't run anyone over intentionally. That the aggressor was Bone, a well-known hothead with connections to the Fruit Town Bloods (the same gang Knight believes is implicated in the shooting at 1 Oak). He also told police that Bone had arrived at the scene at the same time as Jimmy Chris, a man who had a long standing beef with Knight (allegedly dating back some 20-odd years to the death of his brother in Atlanta). So, after Knight was attacked, and reversed his truck, knocking Bone down, he would have noticed Jimmy Chris running towards the scene. "Suge would know he wasn't a friend," Marvin said. That was when Knight powered forward and escaped, killing Carter.

In her effort to defend Sloan's account, DA Barnes suggests the gun-shaped object Jimmy Chris removes from Sloan's body and puts in his waistband is actually a walkie-talkie. This is a core argument for the pros-

THE TRAGEDY IS A
REMINDER THAT
THE WORLD NWA
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AS FRESH TODAY
AS EVER

ecution. And Detective Biddle concurs. Never mind that Sloan told police he left his walkie-talkie in the car. As Fletcher assails him with incredulous questions ("Have you ever seen people put a radio in their waistband?"), Biddle looks increasingly irritated. And yet, he expects jurors to believe that when a gang member is run over, the first instinct of a fellow gang member is to rush over before the paramedics arrive, and remove his... walkie-talkie?

"I don't carry a gun!" Sloan protests, overselling the line. "I'm an awardwinning film-maker, I got to get my reputation here! Why would I take a gun to work?"

It's a great question. Also: why were they at Tam's Burgers in the first place? Why was Knight called there? And why is Suge Knight on trial and not Sloan?

AFTER TWO DAYS of preliminary hearing, the judge drops one of the hit-and-run charges and cuts Knight's bail to

USD10 million, mere Gotti levels. For a few days, the word from Knight's camp was that his friend Floyd Mayweather Jr would put up the cash, but it hasn't happened and a Mayweather spokesperson has denied any such offer was ever made. Still, Knight has now been granted the right to see close family. His sisters cheer when the news comes. It's something. Knight's reputation may still be a burden, but maybe the tide is turning.

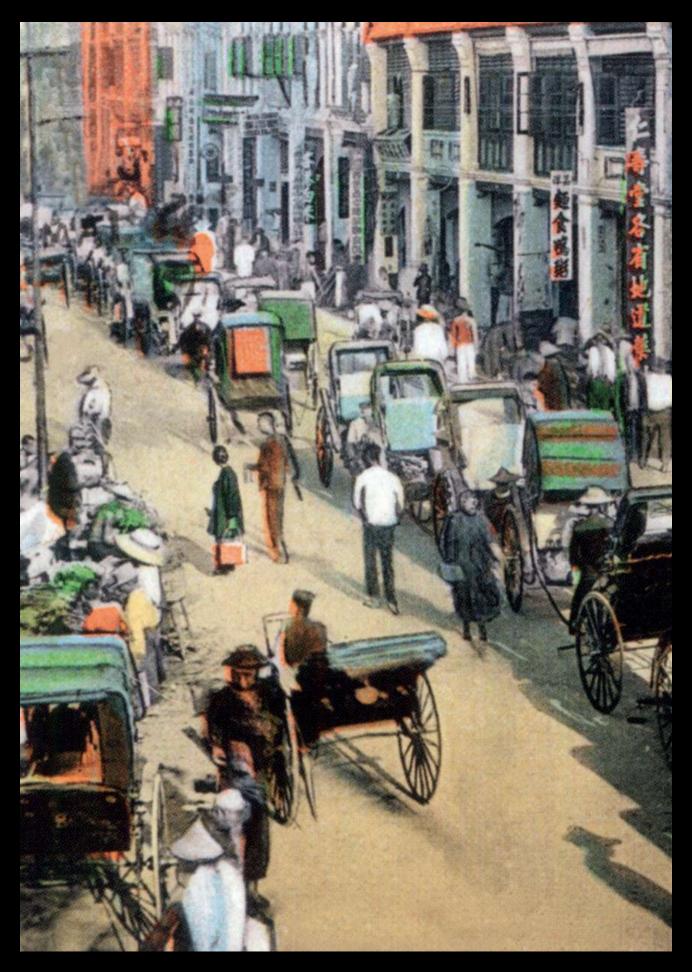
One can never discount a man who built an empire from Compton, who has survived bullets, prison and bankruptcy. But Knight has a battle ahead. His health is suffering. A fundraising website with a goal of USD500,000 for his defence has so far only engaged public support to the tune of USD 2,102. He has had numerous issues with his attorneys; since the incident, he has changed lawyers four times. On May 29, as this issue neared deadline, Matthew Fletcher was fired and replaced by Thomas Mesereau, who succesfully defended Michael Jackson against child molestation charges in 2005.

But hope springs, nevertheless. Virgil Roberts sees him beating the case and reinventing his life with a Tyson-like redemption tour. "I can see Suge on a Vegas stage telling stories." Kelly, however, is hesitant to look far ahead. "We're taking it one case at a time. It's hard. But Suge is always in good spirits, joking around. He stays strong for the rest of us."

The antechamber to Court 101 on the ninth floor of the CCB is cramped and dark, a place people slip out to whisper behind their hands. On the day of Knight's arraignment, Kelly and Matt Fletcher are doing just that, before the court is in session. Then the doors open and there's Knight, surrounded by four grave-looking sheriffs, and they've got him in a wheelchair. But he looks delighted. The happiest face in this dark room.

"Why are you sitting, you can't stand?" Kelly asks.

"Oh hell, yeah," Knight laughs. He gets up, almost catching his ankle chains on the wheelchair. "I can dance!" 18



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FICTION

SEEING THE DEAD MAN

Words by Robert Raymer

WELD QUAY doglegged left. In the centre of the traffic circle just ahead of us stood an onion-domed Victorian clock tower. Opposite was Fort Cornwallis, a 200-year-old, walled fort. Several men were shouting and gesturing to passing motorists as they ran between the two landmarks, causing a commotion. Cars and motorcycles pulled off to the side of the road. People climbed out of their cars or dismounted their motorcycles. Others called out in feverish voices in different languages.

"What's going on?" I asked Azman, my trishaw driver. Azman ignored me and kept pedalling.

I asked again, louder, "What's going on?"

More people darted down a side road by Fort Cornwallis. Their frenzied faces and wild gestures jarred my fatigued senses. Again, I asked Azman what was going on. He continued to ignore me.

When we reached the clock tower, I stuck out my right arm and said, "Turn here!"

Azman pedalled the trishaw into the traffic circle that headed away from the side street.

"Wait! I want to see what's going on!"

"E&O Hotel this way."

"I'll gladly pay extra for the detour."

"Tomorrow I show you Penang. Tonight not good."

"What do you mean, not good?"

"Orang mati," called a young man across the street. "Orang India, mati!"

"What's he saying?"

"I take you to hotel," Azman said. He seemed to be pedalling faster.

"What's he saying?" I said, raising my voice. I was running out of patience.

Azman's face became drawn and haggard like a man about to be fired.

"India man, accident."

"What kind of accident?"

"India man, dead."

"Dead?" The word caught in the back of my throat like a piece of stale bread. Recalling a conversation I had overheard at the jetty, I asked, "How did he die?"

"India man, drowned."

"Drowned?" Only a short while ago, I was speculating about drowning... It was too much of a coincidence. I told Azman, "Take me there."

"I take you to hotel."

"Take me there. I want to see him!"

Azman didn't know what to make of me.

Neither did I... I only knew I needed to see this drowned man.

Azman stopped pedalling and when the trishaw stopped, I grabbed a map of George Town from my luggage and got out; with the help of a streetlight, I checked my location. The clock tower and Fort Cornwallis were clearly marked. Further ahead on Lebuh Light and over there was the E&O Hotel. Judging from the distance since turning from Weld

Quay, the hotel wasn't far; walkable. To double-check my bearings, I showed the map to Azman. He squinted and studied the map, then turned it completely around.

"Well?"

He looked up at me, his face blank. He sheepishly pointed his thumb in the direction we were heading. Returning to the trishaw, I grabbed the luggage but the thought of taking it to see a drowned man seemed ludicrous, so I shoved it back into the trishaw.

"I want you to take this to the E&O Hotel," I said, as I removed a business card from my wallet and passed it to him. "Give this to the front desk and tell them I'm on my way. My name is right there, Steve Boston."

Azman puzzled over the card until I handed him some money. I waved another ten ringgit in front of him.

"This I'll give you tomorrow to make sure it arrives safely," I said. "Understand?"

Azman's gap-toothed smile returned.

"Can I trust you?"

"Malaysia man can trust. Indonesia man cannot."

A boy rushing by paused to look at me as I watched Azman pedal away with my belongings, wondering if I had just made another mistake. The boy's two friends called to him as they ran towards the clock tower. They crossed the road and took a shortcut through an empty parking lot.

I followed their lead. Except for the three boys, who were a distance ahead, the road was deserted and dark. Only one streetlamp seemed to be working and it was obscured by a tree. I considered putting an end to this foolishness, but I was too caught up to turn back now.

The road up ahead where a small crowd was milling around was better lit. Still panting from running, I took a few moments to catch my breath.

Curious to see a lone Westerner approaching out of the darkness, people stared at me and whispered. As I came closer, a palpable disquiet set in. Several of the men stepped aside, clearing a path for me that led to a low seawall. Below, on a pocket of sand trapped between the dovetailing wall and a naval building jutting into the sea, stood two Chinese fishermen and a tall Indian in a black cap. At their feet lay the swollen, prostrate body of the drowned man.

The clothes that the man wore were casual, everyday clothes. His shoes, however, were missing. The bottoms of the man's feet seemed uncommonly white like polished ivory... Near the body—almost touching it—was a piece of driftwood. The juxtaposition of the two struck me as odd; both had been swallowed by the sea and coughed up onto the shore. Unlike the Indian man, whose life had been washed out of him, the wood had been twisted and transformed into something beautiful to behold. One perishes, the other transcends... If only man could be so resilient.

All at once, I began to feel queasy. The man's body, I just realised, could well have been my own.

This is an excerpt from the book A Perfect Day for an Expat Exit.

just for the love of it.

Words and photo archiving by Paul Augustin and James Lochhead

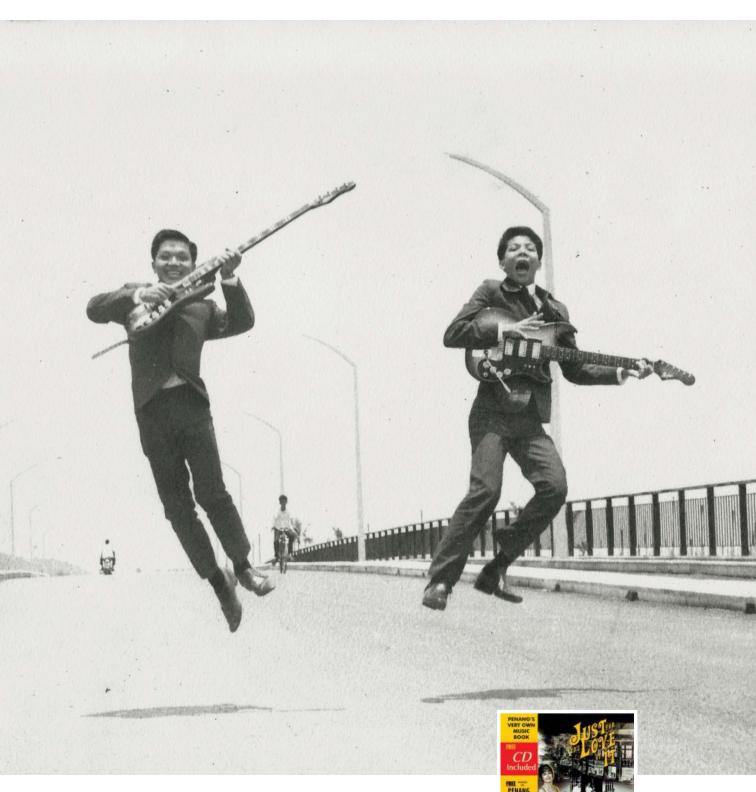
The Equinox

In the year before The Beatles burst onto the world, Equinox were formed in 1962 by two sets of brothers from different families: John and James Lim and Johnny and Reggie Khaw, with Joseph Tan on drums for the Young Ones talentime contest at the Rex Theatre in Butterworth. While experiencing an almost constant change of lead singers including Bennie Beatle Loh, Katherine Vaz and Peta Basel from Australia, Equinox played at many functions and also organised their own roadshows throughout the northern region, as well as recording some Radio Malaysia sessions.

Equinox had their own magazine and gained a reputation as one of the top bands in the north when they won the 1967 northern region Battle of the Bands competition organised by the Musicians' Union of Malaysia.



squire has discovered a wonderful book and we think that everybody needs to know about it. *Just for the Love Of It* is a compendium of Penang's popular music scene from '30s-'60s. The book is a scrupulously researched compilation of the dozens of musical acts that emerged in Penang at a time when the island was clearly, well, jumpin'. The island didn't just produce P Ramlee but many other acts that were famous in their day, even if barely remembered today.



Esquire has selected a few photos and stories of bands from the 1960s, specifically the era of "Pop Yeh Yeh." The scene conjured itself into being after young Malaysians and Singaporeans witnessed the amazing sight of Cliff Richard's backing band, The Shadows who played their guitars in ways that Asia had never seen before. Far from being a sleepy backwater, Penang had always been an entertainment entrepot (Farsi Indians invented *bangsawan* in Penang), and Western pop was just the latest musical form to pass through and be given a new twist (and shout).—*Kam Raslan*



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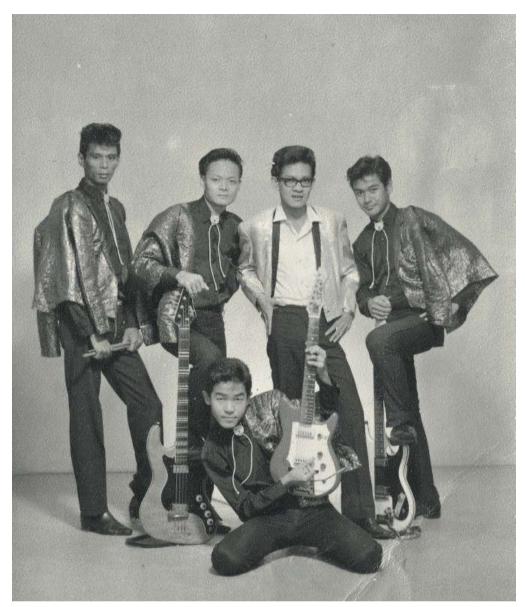
PROMOTION - A SUPER ATTRACTION"

Front by The Maleyan Press, 7 is 10-A, Church Street, Penang

The Dreamers

Led by Jimmy Tan, the band received the Best Teenage Band award at the Hari Bunga Poppy Appeal talentime stars competition in 1963 and rapidly gained popularity in Penang. They backed singers such as Vince Chu and Rocky Teoh on occasion and were also the backing group for a number of talentime competitions.

The Dreamers later changed their name to the Dream Lads and then to the Wildcats. Among some of the members of those bands over the years were Eddy Tan, Ricky Yeoh, Paul Chee, Eddie Quah, Peter Leong, Tony Chan, Tony Perkins, Akashah Ismail and Joseph Kee.



Heartbeats

Heartbeats comprised Antonio Geronimo, Gilbert Joseph, Eddy Thong, Robert Tan and the brothers Lawrence and Gerry Chee. When Heartbeats disbanded the Chee brothers formed Born Free together with Tony Chan, Steven Quah and Nicky The. Born Free were the opening act for the famous Tremeloes concert at the Penang Stadium.





Left: Twilights

Originally called the Shannons, Twilights consisted of Robert Ong, Steven Saw, Dino Lee, Tan Siak Kim, twin brothers Tiong Ghee and Tiong Howe as well as Fred Cheah who later with David Thiagarajan, James Lee, Alberta and Fabian Choo won the overall prize for the Radio Malaysia talentime contest in 1969.

Below left: The Ladybirds

The Ladybirds were reputedly the first all-girl band in Penang and possibly Malaysia. The band originally comprised Christina Teoh (lead guitar), Alice Thum (rhythm guitar), Queenie Tan (bass) and Roki (drums). The Angels in Singapore, a popular all-female band were inspired by the example of the Ladybirds.

Below right: Teruna Ria

Originally known as Enam Sekawan, the band were persuaded to change their name by the major Penang music personality Ahmad Merican during a trip to Kuala Lumpur to appear on RTM. The members of Teruna Ria were A Manif, Basir Ahmad, Yaacob Bakar, Rahmat, Yusoff Ahmad, Elias and Abass bin Hj Abu Bakar.

With the vocalist L Ramli, the band had a hit with their first recording "Dara Pujaan". This was followed by a number of hits, including "Antara Kau dan Aku", "Salma", "Perte-muan Terakhir" and the major 1965 hit "Siapa Bilang Aku Tak Sayang". Teruna Ria were the first band in Penang to have Fender Showman amplifiers.





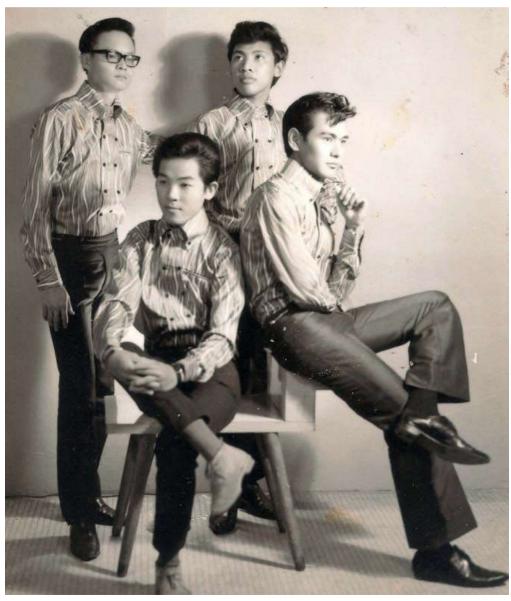
Right:

Jungle Lynxs
Jungle Lynxs were originally
called the JLs. Their members included Indonesians who were studying in Penang at that time. The main members of Jungle Lynxs were Franco Francisco, Billy Lee, Ah Guan and Tony Chan. They did the "A-Go-Go" pop show tour all over Malaysia, backing various singers. They also provided the backing for Vince Chu and Maggie Wong on some of their recordings. The later members of Jungle Lynxs included Fred Cheah and Jimmy Wong (Ah Weng).



Below right: Wildcats

Originally called the Dreamers and then the Dream Lads. Note how the band's clothes have evolved from an early Elvis rockbilly look to a more polished Beach Boys style as the far-out '60s progressed. 12





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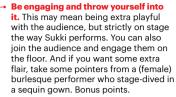
How to win over a small child

- At first, back off. People start getting stranger anxiety at age one.
- Let them get used to you. Interact with the Mum and Dad for at least a half hour so they can observe you're parent-approved.
- When you approach, kneel to their level so that you can make eye contact. Do not lift them to yours, even if they're named Simba.
- Talk to them about whatever they're doing at the moment—the train set they're playing with, the TV show they are watching, the plastic object they're chewing.
- Ask if you can read that book with them.
 Would they like to sit next to you? Can you check out that plastic object they're about to choke on? Empower them.
- Beware of toddlers. They are selfabsorbed—meaning that they're interested in you only if you play on the floor with them the whole time or give them a present. Set boundaries.
- As for screamers: Don't take it personally.

The fine art of Boylesque

It's surely just a decadent Western thing (or a Singaporean thing), but perhaps you've watched the girls do their thing and want in on the action too. Yes? It's not just about stripping—man, if you want to do just that, there's always the Magic Mike crowd. For a bit more tease and possible hilarity, Singapore's first burlesque star **Sukki Singapora** shows us the ol' bump 'n' grind, and offers some advice on how best you can do it too.

- Try make-up. "You don't have to go full-face -drag, but there's nothing wrong with touching up a little bit here and there for stage."
- Go macho. More power to you if you want to
 do the whole pasties and feather fans routine.
 But you don't necessarily have to be effeminate.
 Check out Mr Gorgeous and Wrong Note Rusty
 for macho examples. And if you do...
- Straight cred? It's not the sole domain of gay men. "It's all flavours, all shapes, all sizes and all sexualities."
- Corsets. Yes. You don't necessarily have to get one, but if you do want one, there are corsets for dudes too. Refer to the sidebar below.
- Ready to strip doesn't just mean a willingness to get down to your knickers. And a G-string is a must for most public performances. Do ensure that your clothes are easy to strip off too.
- Glitter nipples. We hear crowds go wild for that sort of thing.
- Bling it up. "Swarovski crystals are what showgirling and showboying are all about. That Hollywood/Las Vegas glamour is so important. If you're wearing a tailored suit on stage and channelling a Fred Astaire vibe, make sure it's all about attention to detail, like a Swarovski lapel to make it more showboy. You have to make an effort when you're doing burlesque.
- Costume okay. We personally haven't seen a sexy panda act before. Get on it.
- Use props. If you don't know what to do with your hands, use a prop, such as a chair, a coat stand, or maybe a Jaguar.



- Be confident; don't feel embarrassed. Don't feel daunted by a huge female audience, and don't get freaked out by a huge male audience either. "With burlesque and boylesque, it's all about artistic talent and sensuality, and that goes for men as well," affirms Sukki.
- Snap closures and zippers are your best friends. Keep your Burberry Prorsum suits for events where you keep your kit on. But never Velcro, buddy.
- Groom, groom, groom. We get it; you like your fur. But "you don't want the hedgerows poking out of the garden," says Sukki with a laugh. Especially when a G-string barely covers your nuts. Sorry, we went there.
- You can pad. Just don't use socks. Yeah, we went there again!
- Dad bod okay. Sukki's not kidding about all shapes and all sizes; this is not Chippendales. Mr Gorgeous does an act where he strips from a hermit crab costume!
- Point your toes. Goes without saying that you need to practise your routine, but Sukki emphasises this a lot. It's terribly important.



A note on corsets

First things first, leave the girl corsets to the girls. You don't want the hourglass stuff; seek out the V-shape Edwardian, masculine corsets instead. Think Johnny Bravo and Gaston, the exaggerated triangular shape that meatheads at the gym so covet. The male corset is a special category in itself and Sukki recommends Paris-based corsetiere, Mr Pearl.

- Never let anyone tie it for you. Tie it yourself so you can get out of it.
- Do not tight-lace. On your off days, you may do this. On stage, it's just an aesthetic. And you might faint mid high-kick.
- Get a custom-fitted one. Most of the cheap Made in China corsets are for women anyway.
- To get out of one, be sure that it's tied in the middle rather than at the bottom. Undo the bow, pull the back to loosen, and then unclip the front.
- Or use zippered corsets.



What to do and what not to do as an audience member



Don't do this:

- Just sit and watch, and keep quiet.
- Heckle. "No saying, 'Take it off', please".
- Storm the stage.
- Keep the lingerie. "They're not mementos! Every burlesque outfit is custom-made. My outfits
 are hand-encrusted with Swarovskis and each one is worth several thousand dollars. What looks
 like a little keepsake might be made up of antique lace that costs thousands of dollars and is
 irreplaceable. Give the clothing back!"
- Throw bills on stage. It's not the right environment for it.



Do this:

- Whoop and holler. "Yes, it's dance theatre, but the more the audience gives, the more the performer does too. It's a really informal environment, so it's totally encouraged to whoop and holler to encourage the performer," says Sukki.
- Come dressed for the occasion. "Audience members are thoroughly encouraged to wear corsets
 or eveningwear, because it's an immersive entertainment, and all about women supporting other
 women, or guys supporting other guys, so come dressed for the occasion. Don't wear plain
 clothes," concludes Sukki.
- Throw flowers on stage. "Just don't throw them at our faces. We don't want to get a thorn in the eye."

The finishing moves

To put it quite simply, burlesque takes from ballet a lot, while the more masculine dance style, pasodoble, is utilised more in boylesque. Hey, there's an idea: why not be a matadorboylesque performer? You can do the best routine of your life, but it will all be for naught if you finish off like a deflated balloon. Follow these tips instead:



- Pop your hips out, lean back and draw attention to your best assets.
- Place your hands on your hips. Adopt a widelegged, powerful stance.
- Execute a high kick. But don't do it as a complete beginner.

How to craft a stage name

Step 1

Choose something personal but fun.

Step 2

Consider using a pun, but don't be corny.

Step 3

Do some research to see if anyone has the same name. If yes, do not proceed.

Step 4

Take a shot each time you see "De Ville", "De Light" or "Von something".

Sten 5

Take a shot each time you see a reference to balls.

Step 6

Take a shot each time you see something about tease.

Step 7

Decide to use your first name instead as you pass out.

The resources

The wide world of extraordinary outdoor experiences.



whistlerheliskiing.com 3. Try something called

terrain that features 173

tree runs.

1. Ice climb in Alaska Near Glacier Bay National Park, west of Juneau city, your guides will show you

how to climb glaciated

mountains using anchors, crampons and ice axes. alaskamountainguides.com 2. Heli-ski in Whistler, BC Head to Whistler, BC, and

from December to April, you can take a helicopter to the top of one of 475 runs. You park and unload, and

randonnée Also called alpine touring, it involves wearing skis designed for hiking up a mountain and then skiing down it. Hire a guide who can take you up (and down) four major peaks in Washington state and who can lessen your chances of skiing off a cliff. alpineinstitute.com

4. Heli-tour the Rockies

Flying over Mount Assiniboine along the continental divide, you can check out glaciers, lakes, and rivers from above. You can also land for an hour of snowshoeing or hiking in a remote spot that would otherwise take forever to reach. rockiesheli.com

5. Scuba dive in a geothermal crater

Though it's filled with snowmelt from Utah's Wasatch Mountains, the naturally heated mineral pool in the Homestead Crater is still 35c, making it the warmest diving water in the continental US. homesteadresort.com

6. Master survival in big sky country

Head to Butte, Montana, and learn how to rescue someone buried in an avalanche, start a fire, build a shelter, and repair a snowmobile. thepeakinc.com

7. Go fat tire snow biking

As you pedal through Grand Teton National Park or Wyoming's National Elk Refuge, grip the snow with the bike's four-inch tires and keep an eye out for elk and moose. tetonmtbike.com/tours_ winter.htm

8. Eat waffles at 3,000м

At the top of Rendezvous Peak in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, a restaurant named Corbet's Cabin serves Nutella and peanutbutter-and-bacon waffles with one of the most spectacular views in the . American West. jacksonhole. com/waffles.html

9. Take the real polar express

Reserve a sleeper car on VIA Rail Canada for the two-day, 1,600км ride from Winnipeg to Churchill, the vast subarctic region of northern Manitoba. viarail.ca

10. Mush! Mush!

Mush a team of dogs and maneuver a sled in Minnesota's Superior National Forest. whitewilderness.com

11. Skijore. Really.

It's basically a combination of dogsledding and crosscountry skiing-you're attached by a harness and a rope to a dog while you ski. Try skijoring for yourself in the Hilltown Wilderness Adventures program in western Massachusetts. hilltownwildernessadventures. wordpress.com/skijoring

12. Kayak with humpback whales

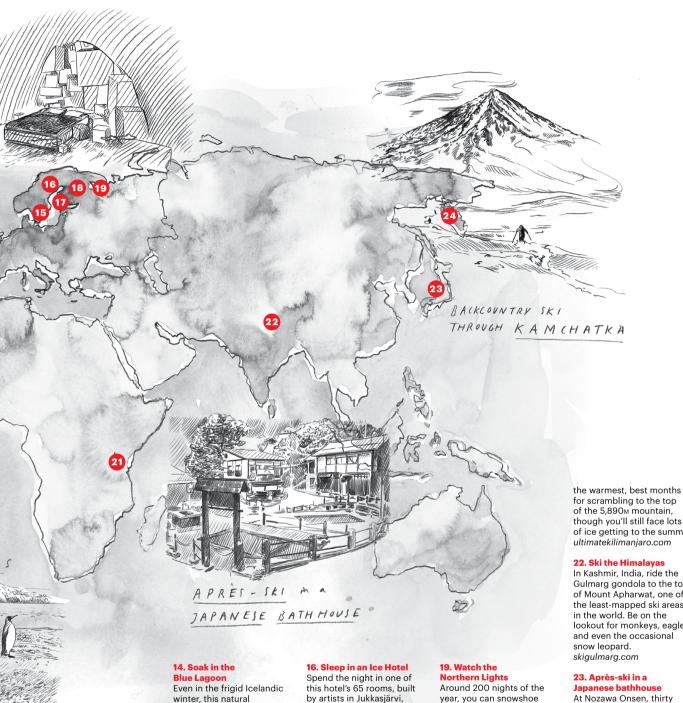
At Natural Habitat Adventures' luxury base camp, set on a fjord within view of the Greenland Ice Sheet, you can kayak with whales, take guided hikes through tundras, and visit Inuit villages. nathab.com

13. Tour the North Pole

Fourteen-day trips on a nuclear-powered icebreaker include a Zodiac boat tour and a hot-air-balloon ride at the top of the world. quarkexpeditions.com

SLEEP IN AN ICE HOTEL

ENGUIN



winter, this natural geothermal lagoon stays between 35c and 40c degrees; float around in the bright-blue water and soothe dry winter skin with the lagoon's silica mud. bluelagoon.com

15. Sweat in a floating sauna

There may not be electricity or running water in Sweden's Kolarbyn Eco-Lodge, but there is a woodfire-heated sauna floating in the lake. wildsweden.com/ kolarbyn-ecolodge

Sweden, using snow and ice. icehotel.com

17. Ice-drive in Sweden

Take the wheel of a studded-tire Porsche and test your limits over frozen lakes. belowzeroicedriving.com

18. Snowmobile in Lapland

A driver's license is all you need to rent your chariot and zip over frozen lakes and through snowy forests in northern Finland. lapland-safaris.com

in northern Finland to view the aurora borealis. laplandsafaris.com

20. Walk with penguins

Take a luxury Linblad Expeditions-National Geographic cruise departing from Argentina. Once you arrive in Antarctica, naturalists will walk you onto ice fields with thousands of penguins. expeditions.com

21. Climb Kilimanjaro

January and February are

for scrambling to the top of the 5,890_M mountain, though you'll still face lots of ice getting to the summit. ultimatekilimanjaro.com

In Kashmir, India, ride the Gulmarg gondola to the top of Mount Apharwat, one of the least-mapped ski areas in the world. Be on the lookout for monkeys, eagles, and even the occasional

miles northeast of Nagano, ski the 1,500м Mount Kenashi, then soak with locals at one of the 13 free community bathhouses (soto-yu), with pools fed by thermal springs. nozawaski.com/winter/en

24. Backcountry ski through Kamchatka

After journeying through the Avachinsky group of volcanoes in eastern Russia, dip your tired legs in the Karymshina Hot Springs. explorekamchatka.com

How to jig your fitness pass right

The year is coming to a close, and everyone's gearing up for New Year celebrations and the bloat that comes with it. But avoid the even heavier commitment of an unused gym membership by taking up one of the fitness passes that's all the rage these days. We speak with Singapore's GuavaPass co-founder Rhyce Lein on how best to utilise the pass.



The gym membership breakdown

A quick look at which one to choose.

Traditional gym/fitness studio

- Pay a monthly/annual fee.
- · Usage of facilities locked to the gym of your membership.
- You see the same bunch of people, depending on
- A few gyms have freezing options, but you're pretty much stuck with it.
- Unless you're at a boutique gym, you won't get to try everything.
- Your progression is certain, as long as you go for each class.

Fitness pass

- Pay a monthly fee.
- · Facilities available to you are only restricted by the gym/studio partners of the pass.
- You see different people all the time.
- You can drop your membership any time.
- Depending on the pass, you can utilise it in different cities too.
- TRY EVERYTHING.
- A limit of three classes per studio/gym, so you won't necessarily get to track progression.

Types of fitness passes in the region

You may be based in this city, but with the way the world works now, you could be doing your Monday workout in Singapore, Tuesday's in Kuala Lumpur, and Wednesday through Sunday in Bangkok—all using the same membership. Here are the few that you might want to check out in the region.



What: KFit.

How much: RM99 monthly, RM49 first month introduction price.

Number of fitness partners: Over 120 studios and gyms.

Also available in: Singapore, Seoul, Taipei, Manila, Hong Kong, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, Perth.

Good to know: Trial memberships are available. Also partners with some hotel gyms.

App availability: Yes, for both Android and iOS

Contact: kfit.com

What: Passport Asia (coming soon to Kuala Lumpur).

Number of fitness partners: Over 200 studios and avms.

Also available in: Singapore, South Korea, India, Indonesia, China, Taiwan, Australia.

Good to know: Trial memberships are available

App availability: Yes, for both Android

Contact: mypassport.asia

Maximising your schedule

For most passes, you get a maximum of three classes at each studio or gym. Here's how to take full advantage of the options available to you, based off Lein's own schedule with some tweaking on our part. We anticipate hardcore fitness enthusiasts.

Red- Hardcore Black: Lein's

MONDAY

Morning Yoqa

Lunch

Muay Thai

Evening Floatation therapy

TUESDAY

Morning

Spinning class

Lunch Parkour

Evening

WEDNESDAY

Morning

Lunch Muay Thai at a different studio

Evening Pole dancing for men

Evening

Something new

THURSDAY

Rest day for Lein

Morning

No rest for the hungryboxing again

Lunch Yoga

EveningBJJ at different studio

FRIDAY

Morning

Bootcamp with the team

Morning

Lunch

Spinning class

Evening CrossFit before paleo drinks

Evening

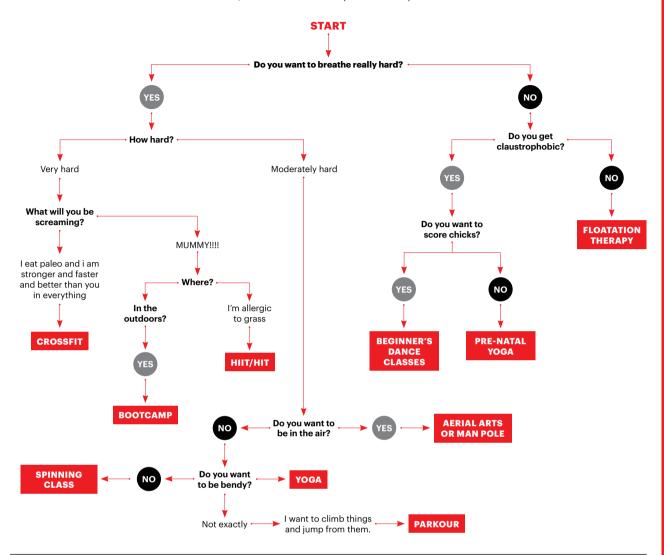
Pilates with the team

Additional note: *Try out some dance classes to meet women. Get memberships in all the passes available to do more classes. Don't sleep.

How to choose your workout

You now have access to all kinds of fancy workouts, but the tyranny of choice is getting you down.

Don't fret; consult this flowchart to plan the rest of your month.





Class etiquette

This is for those who are more used to a own-time-owntarget training schedule at the gym. Or for anyone who hasn't taken a fitness class in a while, and it seems like many have yet to grasp it right. So here it is, again:

"Put your phone down. Take an hour of your day to enjoy the class. Leave everything else behind and just do something for you—whether it's spin, yoga or bootcamp," says Lein. "Arrive five minutes early, so you don't end up scrambling for the class. It ruins your experience and you won't get to enjoy the benefits offered by the class. If you're new, that extra time really helps. It might give the studio an opportunity to walk you through the amenities and explain what to expect in class," he concludes.

Interacting with the ladies

Advice from old Esquire that we (mostly) no longer follow.



How to handle a "catfight"

1930s: "When I see one of these coming on I first remove all the loose objects from the bar, such as ashtrays, glasses, bottles and plates".

2015 update: Invest in break-resistant glassware and when a fight occurs, quietly back out of the room.



How to compliment a woman

1980s: "Don't compare her with other women. Blatantly tactless is the 'I always thought my wife had the best [eyes, breasts, legs, etc], but yours are terrific".

2015 update: We got nothin'. Solid advice.



How to lie successfully to a woman
1960s: "Keep it short, simple and emphatic. Overelaborated
prevarication will arouse instant suspicion, and her self-respect
will impel her to trap you".

2015 update: Not lying also works.



How to get off a bus or train with a woman 1980s: "Unless she's bigger and stronger, the man should always precede the woman off a bus or train so that he can turn back to offer a helping hand".

2015 update: Turns out women know how to get off buses and trains by themselves.

Esquire SUBSCRIPTION

"It is not enough we do our best, sometimes we have to do what is required."

WINSTON CHURCHILL

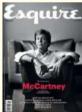
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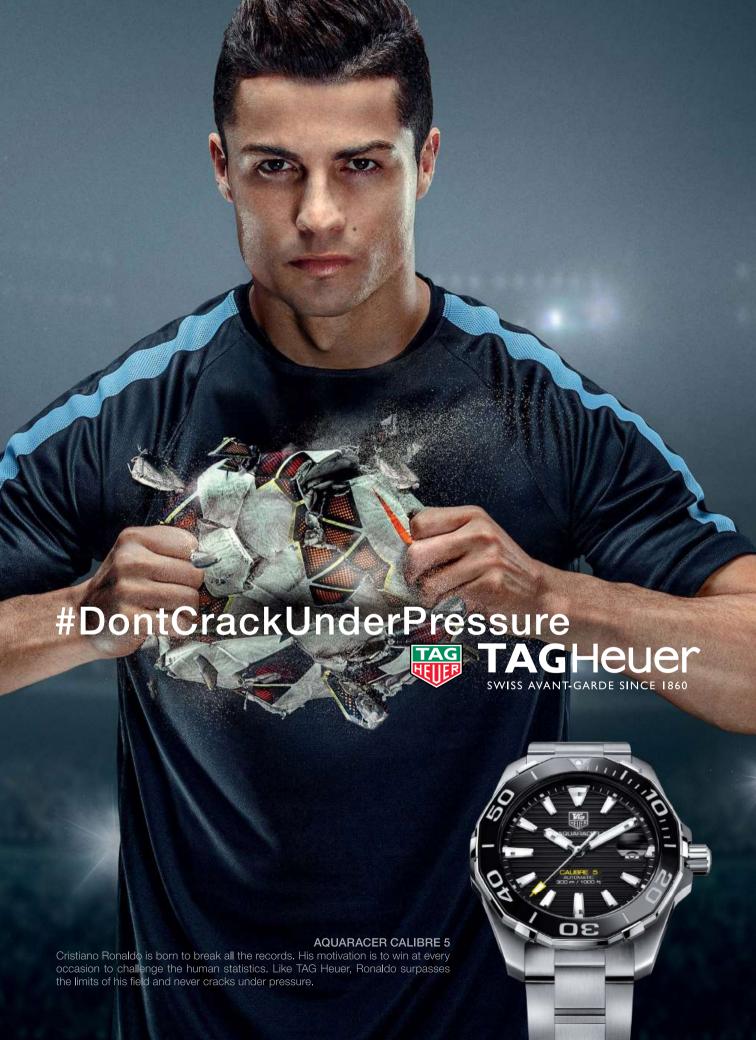
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STYLEFILE



* Denotes translated prices

In spiritus .

Watches.

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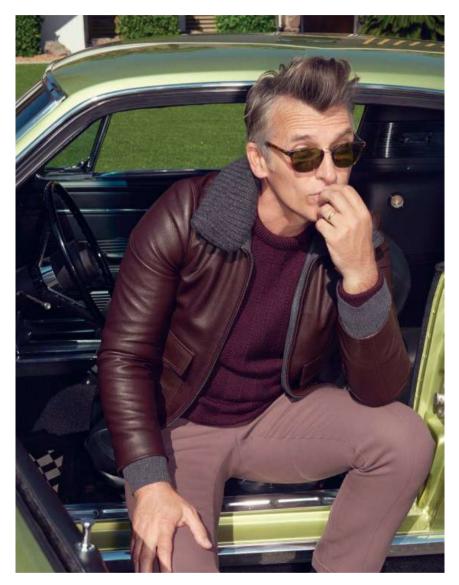


WATCHER

Adventures close to home.

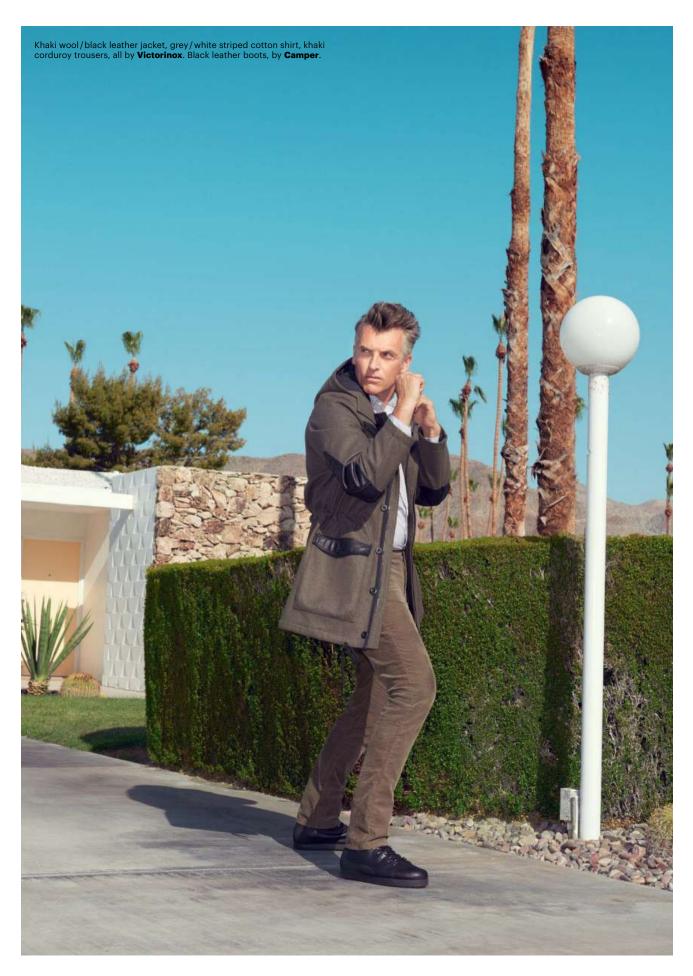
Photographs by Kourtney Roy **Styling by** Gareth Scourfield

Grey wool double-breasted coat, dark grey cotton shirt, grey wool trousers, black leather high-top trainers with white soles, all by **Oliver Spencer.**



Burgundy leather jacket, burgundy wool jumper, light brown cotton trousers, all by **Pringle of Scotland**. Tortoiseshell-frame sunglasses, by **Ray-Ban.**







Brown lambskin double-breasted coat, white cotton shirt, both by **Hermès.**





Grey herringbone cotton coat, grey cotton shirt, black denim jeans, all by **Prada.**



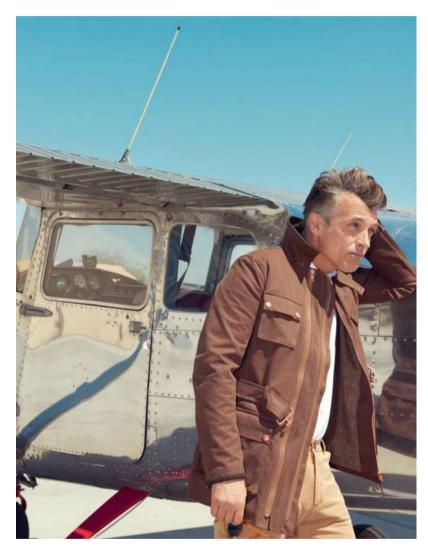
Blue/white checked cotton shirt, navy cotton trousers, both by **Tommy Hilfiger.** Glasses, model's own.



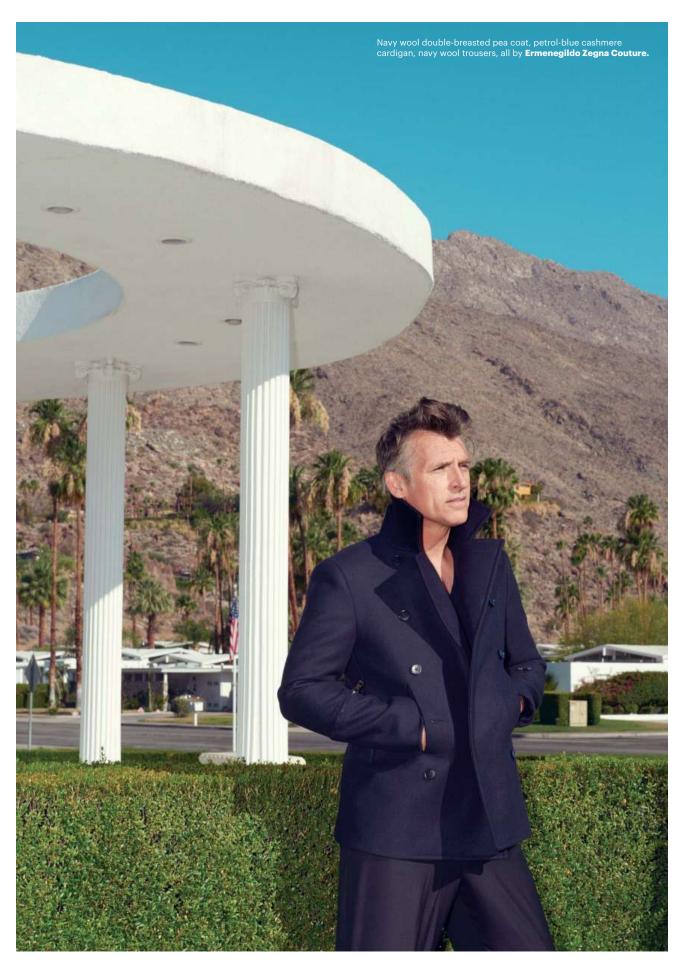




Navy wool jacket with white nylon lining, white cotton shirt, navy wool trousers, all by ${\bf Moncler.}$



Olive cotton-canvas jacket, white cotton shirt, tan cotton trousers, all by Private White VC.



Brown sheepskin coat, beige cashmere crew neck jumper, khaki cotton trousers, dark brown leather shoes, all by Margaret Howell. Black cotton socks, by Falke.



Green 1967 Ford Mustang Fastback provided by McCormick's Palm Springs Collector Car Auctions, California, USA. classic-carauction.com

Thank you to:
The City of Palm Springs; Keith and Delsey
McCormick; Meaghan Gaffney-Howe and
the Villa Roma; Elvis Honeymoon Hideaway;
Lisa Slam and the Palm Springs Air Museum;
Janice Lopez.





HOW For all the virtues of volume and bulk, a closefitting coat and a streamlined suit could very well be the warmest everyday items in a man's office arsenal. Provided they're the right ones. RESS Photography by **Christopher Griffith** Left: Double breasted wool coat, wool and mohair suit, silk and cotton shirt, and silk tie by Dunhill. Calfskin shoes

by Church's.

Right: Double breasted wool blend peacoat, wool blend suit, and silk tie by Boss. Cotton shirt by Turnbull & Asser. Calfskin boots by Santoni.

Opposite: Single-breasted wool coat, two-button wool and silk suit, stretch-cotton shirt, and silk tie by **Giorgio Armani**. Calfskin double-monk-strap shoes by Santoni.

THE HARD LINE ON STREAMLINED COATS
There is no one length that's right for everyone—it's a matter of comfort and taste. (We're talking about coats here, folks. Coats.) There is also no one style that suits all, with a single-breasted knee-length coat proving just as versatile as a high-and-tight double-breasted peacoat. However, there are two shades more versatile than any others—navy blue and charcoal gray—and one fit that works best for most of our everyday lives: a close one. A sharply cut overcoat typically traps body heat better than a baggy one, and it's usually a whole lot more flattering, too.







Opposite: Wool coat, three-piece wool suit, cotton shirt, wool and silk tie, and leather shoes by **Dolce & Gabbana**. Leather gloves by **Paul Smith**.

Top: Wool coat by Paul & Shark. Wool and silk blend suit by Canali. Cotton shirt and leather gloves by Paul Smith. Silk tie by David Fin. Leather oxford shoes by Florsheim. Cotton socks by Bresciani.

THE LIGHTENING OF THE WOOL SUIT

Of all the sartorial innovations of 21st-century life, the best one for suit wearers has got to be the gradual lightening of woven wools. Thanks to advances at textile mills, hearty weaves that used to clock in at a beefy 400s now weigh in at considerably less without losing any of their inherent warmth. Ask a tailor or salesman for the best wools or wool blends he's got for 340s—a man wearing a suit made of such cloth will still enjoy all the comfort he needs for winter yet without burdensome weight.







This page: Wool and cashmere coat, threebutton wool suit, and silk tie by **Brioni**. Cotton shirt by **Hamilton**. Calfskin double-monk-strap shoes by **Fratelli Rossetti**.

Opposite: Reversible quilted parka, twobutton wool suit, cotton shirt, calfskin derby shoes, and silk tie by **Louis Vuitton**.

THE UNEXPECTED PAIRING

There are days when an ample wool topcoat is a godsend, and there are days when the length and weight of the thing is just too much to bear. For the latter, make like a well-dressed Italian and pair a light technical parka with a suit. There are the obvious functional advantages to wearing a performance-driven parka, but there's also the appealing contrast between the sartorial and the sporty. Just make sure the parka is long enough to cover your suit jacket.









ITHE MUSIC-

Our local musicians from across all genres hanging out together in some rockin' pairs of Louis Vuitton footwear.



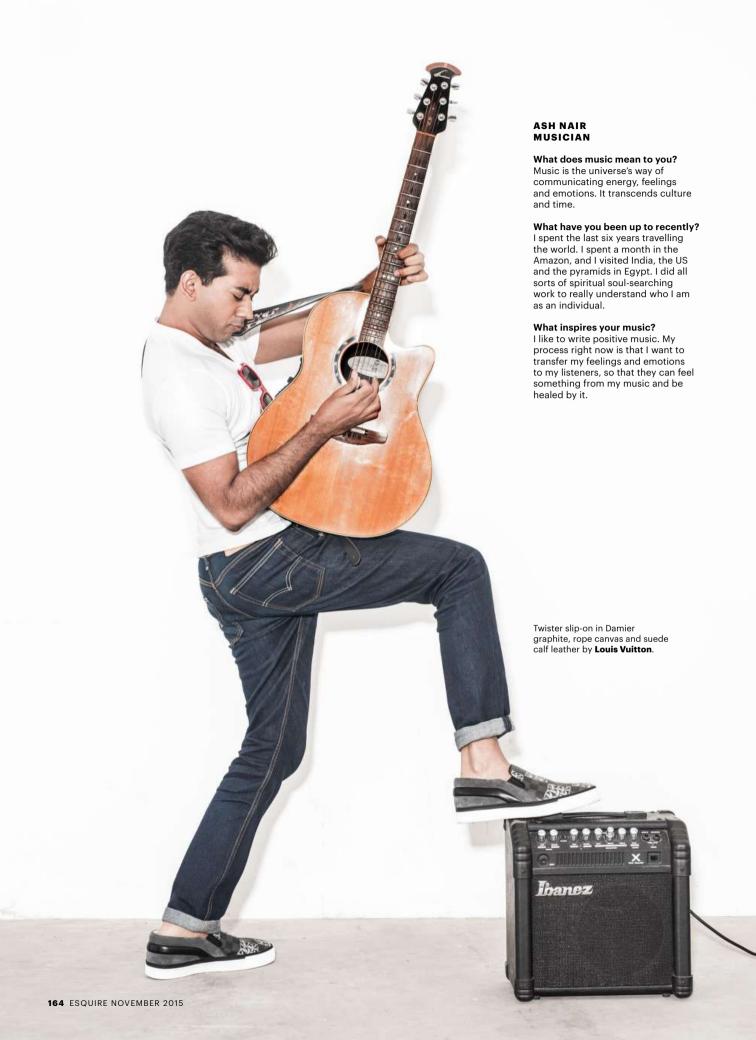
MAVERICKS:

Photographs by Vincent Paul Yong Interviewed by Sim Wie Boon















Style syllabus

Two fashion books to add to your Christmas wish list.











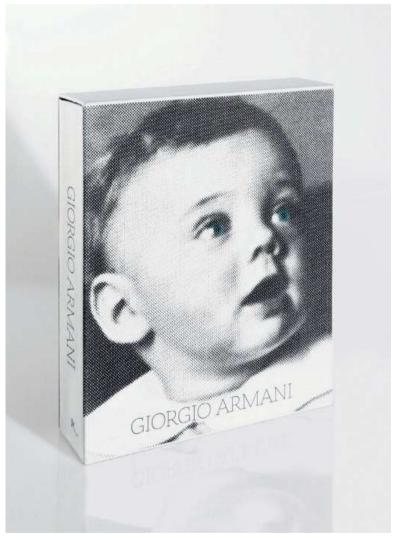
BOTTEGA VENETA: ART OF COLLABORATION Bottega Veneta's Tomas Maier is no stranger when it comes to melding art and fashion. In 2002, he launched Art of Collaboration—a project where he worked with different artists to photograph Bottega Veneta's seasonal campaigns. The resulting original fashion images now make up this new book, Bottega Veneta: Art of Collaboration. Organised according to each campaign from 2002 to 2016, it tracks the collaborations with big-name artists such as Lord Snowdon, Annie Leibovitz, Peter Lindbergh, Steven Meisel, Robert Longo, and more recently, Jürgen Teller. In total, Maier has worked with 27 different photographers and artists, and the book also features unpublished photos and outtakes from the shoots. With words by fashion critic Tim Blanks and American essayist Daphne Merkin, Bottega Veneta: Art of Collaboration is not only a compilation of stunning images about style, fashion and craftsmanship, but also a formidable vision of the always subtle-chic brand.

www.bottegaveneta.com









GIORGIO ARMANI

As the brand that he founded celebrates its 40th anniversary, Giorgio Armani tells the story of his life in this lavish 576-page memoir. He reveals much about his hitherto little-known private life—from childhood memories to present-day musings—accompanied by 410 photographs, some of which were shot by international photographers like Craig McDean, Aldo Fallai and Peter Lindbergh. The king of greige also discusses various milestones in the company's history, as well as the creative process behind his collections. Couple with Armani's wide interests in home design and furniture, Hollywood glamour, and even sports, this book is pure, unadulterated Giorgio Armani. 12 www.giorgioarmani.com



170 ESQUIRE NOVEMBER 2015 PHOTOGRAPHY BY BAKER & EVANS.



Who what wear

What fashion age do with live in?

Words by Silas Liew

MY EARLIEST FASHION MEMORY is an indelible speck in time. It was the moment that I realised clothes could harbour eternal souls and linger in our primordial heart of hearts. I remember it to this day: how it felt, and how it made me feel. It held up my spine and challenged my body in previously unknown ways. The garment in question was a grey ramie tape-seamed suit by Carol Christian Poell. I had never seen anything like it. Standing in Melbourne's Eastern Market bathed in sunlight streaming in from the arched windows of a chapel annexe formerly tended by Josephine nuns more than a century ago, my blood gushed to every possible extremity. The circumstances pointed to something rather devotional about the whole experience.

I realise now it wasn't only the suit that I was wearing at that particular time and place that moved me. I was also starting to understand how something as inconsequential as an item of clothing could mean the entirety of one's intellectual capacity. It was then that the all-consuming power of a singular idea came to me: the need to examine our preconceptions of what we wear.

Fashion in our city, in all its unapologetic fervour, tends to get caught up in the media hype, the celebrity scrum and the social media circus—a trifecta so irreverently Bacchic that it is rather banal once we step back and take a deep breath. There is a distinction about fashion that separates it from the apparel industry. Lately, with the excessive amount of new entrants into the scene, I've come to question the system more keenly. What warrants its place in the global scheme of things? What profound thought have we seen distilled into the pieces that we put on our racks? What in the name of fashion/art/common sense?

In the heyday of the minimalist avant-garde, the Parisian showrooms of Comme des Garçons and Yohji Yamamoto were filled with all manner of people. I've read accounts describing how everyone down to the last buyer tried on clothes. It represented yet another revolution for the incumbent fashion identity: that clothes are to be experimented with on the wearer's body by the wearer. Then along came the grand notion of democracy with the arrival of prêt-à-porter, something the collective consciousness hungered for and all the fashion houses willingly satiated. To the sentinels who have watched our industry for years, it may seem like a strange war of attrition that our highest badge of honour is that of fast fashion.

To the new generation of fashion consumer, luxury can be a rather dangerous thing. It has been fashion's weapon of choice throughout history, ironically double-edged now in the digital age. Dutch trend forecaster Li Edelkoort proclaimed earlier this year at Design Indaba that "it's the end of fashion as we know it". The oracle behind microtrends and fashion tribes has prophesised the failure of the fashion industry following the rise of Gen-Y and the Millennials. In her mind, the penultimate recourse for the industry is a return to the art of making garments.

I suppose there is sound reason behind Saint Laurent announcing its return to haute couture with Creative Director Hedi Slimane at the helm. There seems to be a concerted effort across the industry to preserve and perpetuate all the remaining artisanal ateliers in Europe. Craftsmanship and technique are being worshipped as the proverbial substance of dreams, without which the art of dressmaking and tailoring would be under threat. It is evidently futile to draw parallels between the heritage of our fashion industry and that of any of the world's fashion capitals as we have a cultural disposition that is distinctly our own. But in spite of fears that our country may be facing greater struggles than a debate over dresses, there are telltale signs that we are not immune from such considerations either.





Yohji Yamamoto.

Top
Fashion students in a studio
in Central Saint Martins,
one of the world's most
prestigious place to study
fashion and design.

172 ESQUIRE NOVEMBER 2015 CORBIS. GETTY.





Lidewij Edelkoort.

The challenge faced by our industry is perhaps not as concerned with commercial progress as it is with intellectual presence. In Kuala Lumpur, new avenues of approach are being attempted to amplify our ideas. We welcome collaboration, transparency and awareness, things that previous generations would have shunned. The time has come for us to look to our peers and leverage the skills that they possess in order to achieve symbiotic outcomes. As emerging markets rise to stake their claim in the global fashion economy, our actions could have greater consequences for the future. An advance of fledgling Malaysian labels has seeded Paris and Milan over the past few years, all championed by young visionaries. A continued intellectual discourse

will foster significant commercial relevance that will allow Asian entities to enter international markets with prodigious positivity.

Even as I write this article, I feel an urgency to assess and recalibrate my personal compass. To me, fashion is about the people I've come to know along the way, rather than a race to become the dernier cri. The essence of a fashion memory speaks simply of the interaction between wearer and garment, an intimate correspondence of skin and cloth. Tear away the minutiae of marketing, aesthetic and perception, and all we're left with is elementary purpose. I believe in what we do because there is tremendous privilege in leading people into their own moments of clarity, and to give what I was once given.

The essentials

If you happen to be travelling then the solution to brutal winter weather isn't to bow to the elements, retreat indoors, and go back home. The solution lies in wearing clothes and accessories that epitomize luxury and performance, traditional craftsmanship and technical ingenuity. For comfort and warmth, start with the six featured here.



THE LOUIS VUITTON HIKING BOOT
Or, the paradox of luxury performance goods.

And now let us consider the paradox of luxury performance goods, in which we pay a good sum of money for something that promises maximal durability and utility, yet because of said good sum, we balk at meaningfully testing said durability and utility. (Just think of all those shiny 4WD

parked in city driveways. Who wants to dent and scratch such beautiful beasts by wheeling through rocky muck?) Instead of proof, we proceed with faith, choosing to believe that it is precisely because of that high price tag and all it stands for—high-caliber craftsmanship, high-quality

materials—that we need not try it out for ourselves. And so we come to these Louis Vuitton hiking boots, with their high-grade, water-resistant leather uppers complemented by rubber side panels and their soles shaped by the wizened hands of Vuitton's celebrated shoemakers. The

boots' structural integrity and physical support are unquestionable, yet do we need to climb a mountain in them to know they're worth the price? Hardly.

Calfskin boots (RM4,900*) by **Louis Vuitton**. *louisvuitton.com*



THE BERLUTI BLAZER Where softness meets strength.

Over the past four years, Berluti has evolved under artistic director Alessandro Sartori to become a purveyor of modern-minded über-luxury clothing, repurposing age-old crafts and practices while still making clothes that have a distinctly 21st-century sensibility. It was only a matter of time before Sartori would turn his attention to the cardigan jacket, a garment that for decades now has been something of a holy grail for men'swear designers seeking a comfortable yet dressy staple for their customers. Working with legendary cashmere specialist Loro Piana, Sartori created this double-breasted cardigan jacket in what he calls a "techno-Donegal," weaving together spaghetti-like strips of baby-calf suede with cashmere. The cloth is loomed by hand rather than on machines because the craftsmen have to work very slowly to ensure the suedeand-cashmere weave is both tight and supple, tough and soft.

Double-breasted cashmere-and-suede jacket by **Berluti**. berluti.com



THE HERMÈS OVERCOAT

Cashmere is still king.

It is hard to remember a time when cashmere, like other once-exotic commodities, such as avocados and Maseratis, wasn't absolutely everywhere. When it wasn't being sold at two-for-one prices at fast-fashion chains. When we weren't taking it for granted and recognising good cashmere for the wonder of warmth that it truly is. This unlined, double-faced cashmere overcoat from Hermès is a welcome reminder of just how good cashmere gets. Primary reason being: Most cashmere weaves are single-faced—one side of the cloth is refined and smooth, the other side messy—and a craftsman making a coat with such a weave will line the interior so nobody has to see the messy side. A coat made from double-faced cloth, though, has no need for a lining, because both sides are finished with great care (and at great expense). Without a lining to impose any structure, a doublefaced overcoat molds to the contours of the wearer's body and offers comfort and warmth nonpareil. For all the innovations to come out of laboratories, good cashmere still fits, feels, and performs like nothing else.

Double-faced cashmere coat (RM35,000*) by **Hermès**. hermes.com



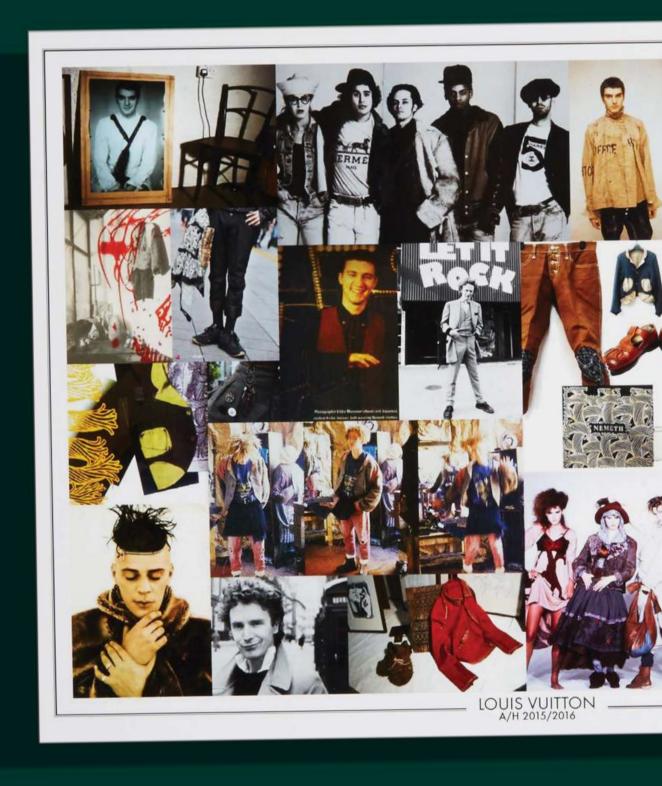
THE TIMOTHY EVEREST PARKA A fine sartorial performance. Timothy Everest is a London tailor of impeccable pedigree. Having trained under legendary Savile Row innovator (and iconoclast) Tommy Nutter, Everest set up shop in 1990 and became his own man—and the man, frankly—by catering to Cool Britannia Londoners in search of a thoroughly modern bespoke suit. This

autumn, in a bold move that would have made Nutter proud, Everest is branching out and applying his eye and irreverent touch to down jackets and parkas. The above example is made of L24 Ventile, a densely woven Egyptian cotton developed for the British military during the Second World War in order

to keep its soldiers dry. (When wet, the fibers swell and effectively block out moisture.) However, it's not the performance of Everest's parka that is most notable: It's the Savile Row touches on the inside, with scalloped facings, corduroy-lined pockets, a high-cut armscye (or armhole), a two-part articulated sleeve (an old

tailoring trick), and a slim tailored fit. A supremely elegant bit of performance kit, this is, and a solution for any man who wishes his tailored overcoat were sportier and his parka suitier.

Ventile parka (RM6,150*) by **Timothy Everest**. jcrew.com



178 ESQUIRE NOVEMBER 2015 PHOTOGRAPHY BY BAKER & EVANS.



Chairmen of the boards

Five designers explain their autumn/winter 2015 mood boards.

LOUIS VUITTON

Kim Jones

Men's collections artistic director

I LOOKED at London clubbing for this collection, but it finally ended up being an homage to ['80s] British fashion designer Christopher Nemeth in its entirety. Nemeth moved to Japan quite early on, so there's not much of his clothing in circulation in the UK. He was a cult designer who built buildings in Tokyo and stuff like that. I love his work and this collection was something I always wanted to do. It just seemed like the time was right.

There are a few images on the moodboard shot by [fashion photographer] Mark Lebon. The one of Nemeth in the Post Office smock and then of [model] Jenny Howorth in the top right corner with the rope around her are really iconic images of the time. I was really just looking at the London scene, but they are all obviously people who I admire. The one of [producer and remixer] Nellee Hooper in the middle is also an influence, because he was part of Nemeth's gang and he did music for the show. I've also put a picture of him and Kate [Moss] in the bottom right corner both wearing Nemeth's clothes.

Most of the images come from friends like Mark Lebon and [stylist and accessories designer] Judy Blame. Nemeth's family would help me get images of him but obviously I also collect lots. I've got tons of magazines and books so most of these images are really just taken from things I have already. Though a couple of them are off Instagram.

A mood board is a starting point, really. Some of it gets edited out, some stuff stays in. It's just a point of reference from which to start your research. Quite often you can look back at it and it can be completely disconnected to the final collection. It changes so much along the way that all the ideas we originally liked are still on the board. But things move forward in different, unexpected ways. *uk.louisvuitton.com*

BRIONI
Brendan Mullane
Creative director

FROM THE VERY beginning, we choose a feeling and destination. I try to imagine what the Brioni man might be thinking, where he might be travelling to and what he would wear. That leads me to a point of reference. It's generally art-related; an artist, an exhibition or a movement. The A/W '15 collection was all about the Spanish Riding School, Vienna and the Wiener Werkstätte movement.

Since I've been at Brioni, there have been a few instances of what I like to think of as fate. When I did the Japanese collection [A/W '14], I was looking through the diary of Brioni's co-founders and found that they had travelled to Japan. And then with this collection, we discovered that it takes nine years to qualify as a rider at the Spanish School; the same time it takes to become a Brioni tailor. The way I translate it is that a rider is given a horse, and they have to work with it and create something—that's the way we talk about shape.

In A/W '15, we really tried to create this strong equestrian, cadet-type silhouette. The big polo coats that cinch in at the waist, for example, give you that riding feeling. And we took the idea into trousers, making them jodhpur-like and voluminous at the top, and then boots with a buckle all the way up and strap all the way round. Even quilted saddle pads were translated into garments.

And then the other side of it was the Wiener Werkstätte, which I knew a bit about, but we visited the museums when we went to Vienna. They worked with a mix of control and skill to create a graphic movement, but there was also a sense of poetry. In the collection, we used needle-punching and appliqué and pattern to reference that superstrong graphic, the kind you see in their posters.

We have a belted blue coat with red under the collar in the collection and that's the piece that really translated the overall message. It shows that we don't just make great suits; we can cut, we can shape and we can mould, and the silhouette is so strong. It gives a clear message that this is the Brioni man and this is what he's about. *brioni.com*





BERLUTI
Alessandro Sartori
Artistic director

I DON'T START with the shape, only colours and materials. I have the idea of a man in my head at all times—he's chic, he's cool, a bit intellectual and really likes to wear clothes. I like to evolve his own story in my mind. From season to season, collections might reference the mountains, or maybe the sea... but they always need to appeal to that man.

What inspires me most is art, especially that where the craft behind it is most evident—work by people like Joseph Beuys, Alberto Burri and Giovanni Manfredini. I take a lot of photographs, too. Sometimes I'll be watching a film in the evening, and I'll see that the light outside is good, so I'll just grab my camera and go. I like taking portraits of people—beautiful men and women.

For A/W '15, I was crazy about Murano glass, the colour and how it's created. I went to Murano

to spend time with the craftspeople, and within two days I understood that what is happening there is a transformation—a manipulation of a material. The process is simple, but even a slight change in the time, ingredients, their ratio or weight can result in something completely different. There's a link between that and the work we do with our leathers and patinas.

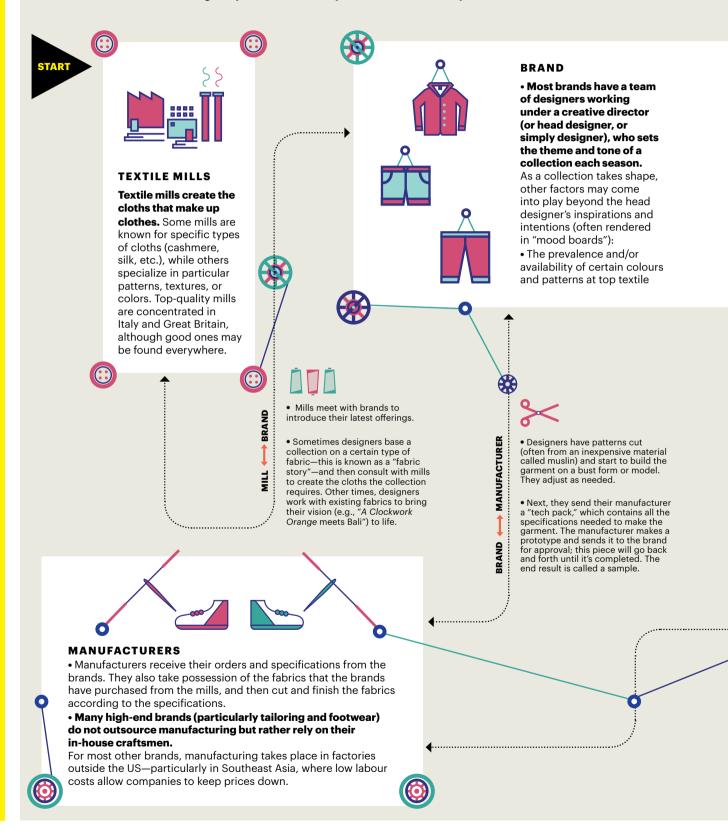
There's a lot of work by Pierre Soulages, from which we took inspiration for colour and treatment. I love the vibrancy, and the almost violent use of colour blended with black. The glossy, transparent glasses inspired a very light, kangaroo leather, shirt-weight jacket in the collection that has a transparent, ceramic-like treatment.

And then the Alessio shoe, which has an upper cut from one single piece of leather, has a similar treatment inspired by Murano.

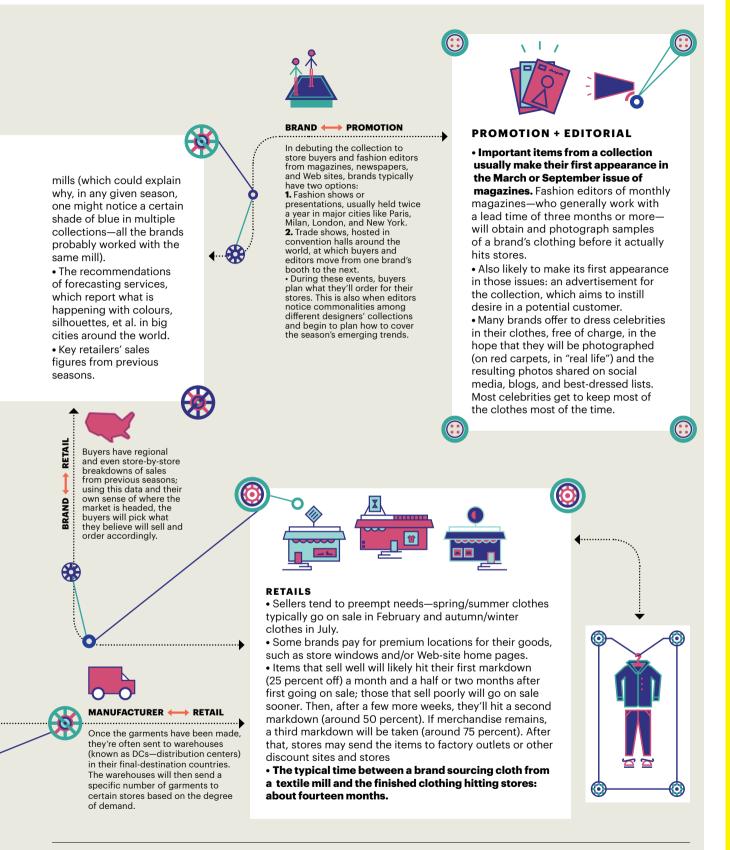
It's gradually sfumato-painted with different shades of blue—first light, then medium, then deep and dark, like the glass. Of course, I have other boards with sketches and fabrics, too. 12 berluti.com

How fashion works

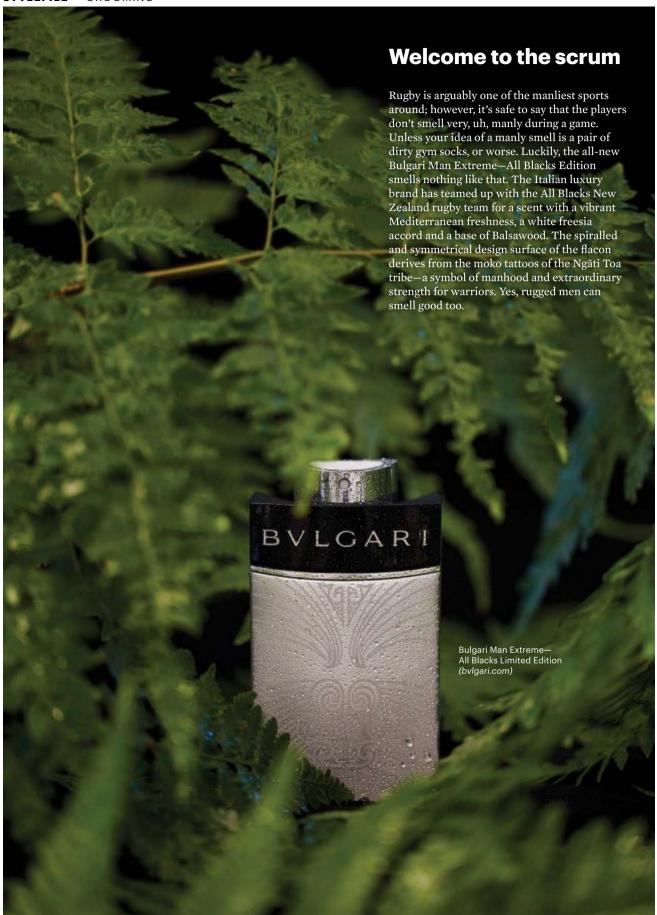
The long story short of how many clothes make their way to a closet.



182 ESQUIRE NOVEMBER 2015 WORDS BY TYLER CONFOY.



With thanks to: Michelle Alleyne, assistant professor of fashion marketing at Parsons School of Design; Tim Crabtree, account specialist at American Merchandise Liquidators; Sandi Davidson, professor of fashion design at Savannah College of Art and Design; Pamela Ellsworth, associate professor and chairperson of global fashionmanagement at Fashion Institute of Technology; Catherine Geib, assistant professor of fashion merchandising management at FIT; Bernard Kahn, adjunct assistant professor of production management at FIT; James Mendolia, assistantprofessor of fashion marketing at Parsons; and Patti Carpenter, president and creative director of Carpenter + Company and Trendscope.







BEST OVERALL Series 9 by Braun The Series 9 generates 10,000 sonic microvibrations to deliver 40,000 crosscutting actions per minute. BEST BATTERY LIFE Advanced Lithium 2.0 Beard Trimmer by Wahl Admittedly, all of the shavers on this page offer The Esquantian page of the shaver of the shaver

head work together

cleans itself while

charging. RM2,142*, boots.com Admittedly, all of the shavers on this page offer impressive levels of juice, but none rival the Lithium Blitz by salon staple Wahl. A one-hour charge powers it up for 240 minutes (which is three months' use, on average), and plugging it in for one minute will give you three for shaving. RM584*, wahlglobal.com

WAHL

BEST FOR VERSATILITY StyleShaver by Philips

Philips' waterproof StyleShaver has a double-foil shaver, 12 length-adjustable beard cutter and rotating precision trimmer for those hard-to-reach spots. RM584*, selfridges.com

Make the cut

The Esquire rundown of the world's best electric shavers.

Gone are the days of loud, overheating, quick-to-blunt shavers that wrench hairs from the skin and run out of battery before you've reached your moustache. Now we have sleek, unassuming pieces of futuristic follicle management technology that whip off your five o'clock shadow (or more) with the minimum of fuss. Some of them even clean themselves... Here's five of the best.



Aside from the Japanese nanotech blades and pivoting head, Panasonic's ES-LT6N has sensor technology that judges the density of your beard and adjusts motor speed accordingly. Nifty. RM4,142*, panasonic.com





BEST FOR TOUGHNESS MB4850 by Remington Ideal for the man who travels a lot and makes a point of fitting everything into his carry-on, the MB4850 motor is wrapped in high-impact polycarbonate to withstand the most robust treatment. RM390*, remington-europe.com

Space invader The new BMW 7 Series feature

The new BMW 7 Series features laser lights, 3D sensors—and it'll even park itself.

From the outside, this latest version of BMW's flagship, boat-like 7 Series is characteristically sleek, but beneath the hood is some of the cleverest technology in the industry right now. Here's the inside track on a few of the innovations heading your way:

It's lighter than it looks

The car's skeleton is made from a combination of lightweight carbon-fibre-reinforced plastic, aluminium and steel, originating from BMW's electric i3 and i8 designs. This has helped to shed 130 kg in weight despite the car being taller and longer than its predecessor, improving fuel economy and handling.

It features a hybrid powerhouse

At launch comes one diesel (730d) and one petrol (740i) engine, with a plug-in hybrid model to follow in 2016. The 740e is powered by a turbocharged, 2.0-litre, four-cylinder engine twinned with a compact electric motor which on its own is capable of powering the big 7 up to 120km.

It knows how you move

BMW is debuting gesture control technology which uses 3D sensors to register hand movements. So, swiping and pointing could trigger answering and rejecting phone calls, while waggling your finger in a circular motion adjusts the stereo volume. Gestures directed at other road users are, so far, not supported.

Is has an active grille

The 7 is the first in the family to feature the latest active grille technology. Those visible air vents with chrome slats are not just for style, they regulate airflow by opening if the engine needs some extra cooling, and when closed they improve the car's aerodynamics.

Its lights are superpowered

Optional blue laser lights offer incredible visibility in antidazzle high-beam mode by illuminating the road some 600M ahead, twice as far as conventional headlight.



Samsung Galaxy S6 edge+

The Korean giant's latest flagship is a force to be reckoned with.

Words by Sim Wie Boon





STYLE AND FUNCTION might be a very clichéd way of describing a phone in this era but there really is no other way to describe the essence of the Samsung Galaxy S6 edge+.

As one of the leading fighters in the smart phone war, Samsung's Galaxy S6 Edge is the culmination of what happens when one really focuses on the style and aesthetics of device.

Its latest flagship device, the curved display hits back at the critics, naysayers and doubters who have always said their phones feel toy-ish and plastic-ish. The S6 edge+'s glass front and metal around rim makes for a much greater feel and look to the device as its edges are subtly textured from flat to curve in all the right spots. The flow of the glass to metal is seamless making the phone feel

like a natural blend of metal and glass.

The S6 edge+ features an array of specs from the very well improved essentials such as camera, processing speed and memory space to the ridiculous stuff that you never even knew you needed such as their IR blaster, the heart rate monitor that doubles as a shutter button for selfies and TWO wireless charging standards.

Let's talk about their screens. Samsung is very good at screens; have you watched Game of Thrones on one of their TVs? It's amazing. Hence, the S6 edge+'s 5.1 inch Super AMOLED display which bangs up a whopping 2560 x 1440 pixels should come as no surprise. The pixel count makes the display incredibly sharp creating an extremely enjoyable Full HD (1080p) viewing experience.

Above Samsung Galaxy S6 edge+ in black.





Moving on, the phone comes with a 16-megapixel rear camera with optical image stabilisation which helps to reduce blurs by compensating for the little movements you make with your hand when taking a photo. While not a DSLR, the S6 edge+ holds its own camera-wise and is a definite improvement on its predecessor. For video, the camera shoots in 4K as well, making much clearer and sharper your Instagram videos of your recent vacation/dogs and/or cats. Selfies are also made better now with a five megapixel front camera that shoots impressively in low light but honestly, despite the improvement, we don't really advocate for selfies here at Esquire unless of course, it's with the missus.

In terms of software and performance, the S6

edge+ users have little to complain about. Its 64-bit Octa-core processor and 3GB RAM makes it the fastest Android phone ever. It's the ultimate nail in the coffin for any slowdowns one associates with Android based platforms. While it sports a smaller battery size than the S5 (thus maybe lower battery life), the phone does support both major wireless charging standards and rapid charging via USB. Such are the sacrifices one has to make for the sake of aesthetics.

In conclusion, the Samsung Galaxy S6 edge+ is probably the best looking device Samsung has put out so far. Sleek design, legitimately good camera, ultra-fast processor and beautiful screen, the S6 edge+ at the end of the day really is style and function in one. 12

Above Samsung Galaxy S6 edge+ in gold.





Blue moon

Esquire Malaysia joins Johnnie Walker Blue Label on a journey to the centre of the glass.

Words and interview by Ian Loh

ALTHOUGH it's often said that men are visual creatures, we think there's more to men (especially those who drink whisky) than that. After all, drinking whisky has never just been about drinking whisky. It is not only an indulgence, but also a multi-sensory experience that combines sight, scent and taste.

Johnnie Walker Blue Label recently presented Symphony in Blue: A Journey to the Centre of the Glass, an immersive event that combined the physical, architectural, social and gastronomic dimensions of whisky. Featuring a one-of-a-kind musical instrument, dubbed The Flavour Conductor, created by renowned architectural foodsmiths Bompas and Parr, the showpiece instrument engaged guests with a theatrical performance using the latest techniques in projection mapping, combined with sound and light.

We spoke to Johnnie Walker's Global Brand Ambassador, Tom Jones (no, not the singer), to find out more about the whisky-drinking experience.

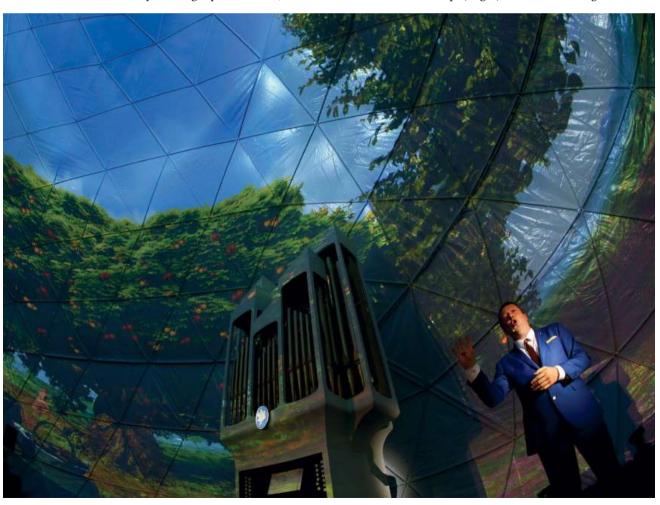
BelowJohnnie Walker Brand Ambassador, Tom Jones, leading the sensory experience.

ESQUIRE: How did the idea of Symphony in Blue come about?

TOM JONES: When they enjoy whisky, we realise that the immediate experience for a lot of people usually involves an ambassador, a blender, a distiller or whatever. So we decided to do something that offers more than just emotional contact. So, rather than telling you this whisky is smoky, we want you to describe the flavours yourself and have an experience where you connect the flavour and the experience, and say, "Oh, I remember the first time I tasted that whisky: it was at the Johnnie Walker Blue Label event in Genting Highlands." We want to create something that is a real experience.

ESQ: So drinking whisky becomes an all-encompassing experience?

TJ: I discovered the concept of "synaesthesia" (a condition in which one sense is simultaneously perceived by one or more additional senses). So, for example, sight, smell and hearing can create



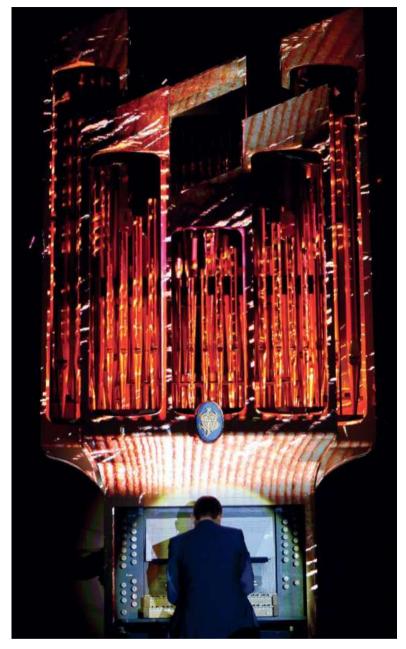
an impression relating to one part of the body by stimulation of another part of the body. So by manipulating the environment-through sight, scent and smell-vou can actually enhance perception and people are more likely to arrive at a flavour themselves. So we highlighted six flavours: fresh, fruity, malty, woody, spicy and smoky. But within each one are many different words, experiences. flavours or foods that you might have experienced before. We think that this experience will allow you to arrive at a flavour, as compared to, for example, listening to me describing the whisky again and again.

ESQ: What's your most memorable whiskydrinking experience?

TJ: I'm very lucky to have been given a chance to travel the world. I guess it's an experience not evervone gets to do. For example, I've enjoyed Blue Label while riding an elephant in South Africa, standing in Ha Long Bay in Vietnam and just sitting in New York. I couldn't nail down which one is my favourite, because I've been really lucky to have such great experiences.

ESQ: This event is essentially an interactive way to engage with your consumers. What are the other ways that Johnnie Walker is looking to explore in the future?

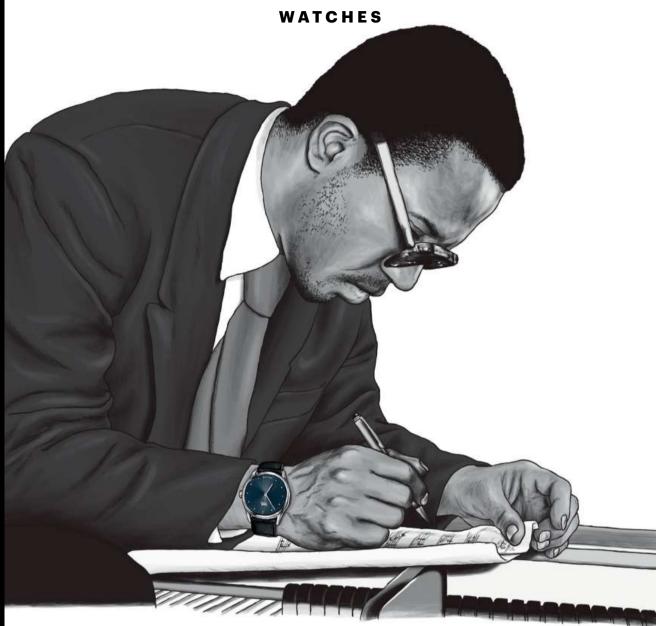
TJ: I think the way we conduct business has changed dramatically. Nowadays, we need to be very much in tune with both our consumers and non-consumers. We need to know what people are talking about, what they are enjoying, and what's fun for them. If you're not in tune with them, then it's incredibly difficult to engage with them. Innovation is very important for us. Whisky is something that we have had for more than 500 years in Scotland. We need to bring out experiences that people will enjoy. We are also experimenting with new ways to invigorate the market and also capture people's interest; for example, we have a glass that plays music when it comes into contact with your teeth. 19





360 mapping projection of the original Johnnie Walker store.

The Flavor Conductor created by Bompas & Parr.



Having the Blues

Until recently there have been very few timepieces dedicated to music, but there is one watchmaker that has devoted an entire section of its watch collection to JAZZ! Oris has created a series named after the most famous names in the history of jazz, such as John Coltrane, Chet Baker and, well, Bob Dylan. This limited edition piece has been dedicated to the pianist Thelonious Monk, a jazz genius whose highly individual take on the rudimentary rules of jazz helped changed the art form forever. Famed for his dexterous fingers and seemingly simple yet highly complex music, his style has inspired jazz, the blues and the watchmakers at Oris. The simplicity of its design is dedicated to the effervescent sounds of jazz and the blue sunburst dial represents the music that arose from the black culture of the American South, and which has since taken over the world. Oris have even added a little "kink" in the design at 11 o'clock and at the 11th minute to reflect the "Mad Monk's" unconventional accents on the keyboard. Perhaps more precisely than the swirling beats of jazz, the watch ticks along with precision, driven by an automatic mechanical movement housed in a polished stainless steel case. This is a special and unique timepiece.

* Denotes translated prices

Time to dance

Watchmakers aim for their creations to be timeless and they approach this elusive goal through automations and complications. The Bulgari Papillon Heure Sautante is one of the latest marvels of haute horlogerie. A modern interpretation of timelessness.

Words by Leong Wong



THE PAPILLON Heure Sautante is a member of the iconic range of watches created by the watchmaker par excellence, Daniel Roth, whose atelier, along with his master-watchmakers, is now owned by the Bulgari Haute Horlogerie division. As we know, Roth was one of the forerunners in turning the world around to falling in love with mechanical watches. His distinctive and unique case shape design, which can be best described as a "squoval", houses the *papillion* (French for "butterfly"). The retrograde hour, minute and second hands that sweep across the semi-circular dial looks like a butterfly wing-sweep. Over the years some of the

most innovative and creative watches have been created from the Daniel Roth atelier.

Even when it was hot from the oven, the world's watch watchers were bowled over by their first impressions of the Papillon Heure Sautante. In its earliest incarnations, we only had a chance to view it on our computer screens, and when we finally saw the timepiece in all its glory it was, indeed, a sight to behold with its delightful aesthetics and complications.

The watch is uncluttered and yet unusual in its design. However, when you take a closer look, it all makes sense. The time is easy to read. The black dial plays host to Arabic numerals whilst the index seconds markers is found around the outer flange. This is followed by a series of large Arabic numerals arranged in a semi-circle along the centre gold ring for the minutes. Further index markers in the inner ring are for the minute markers, and the black Arabic numeral hours are indicated by a digital jumping hour on white ceramic at 12 o'clock.

And now for the highlight: the centre dial consists of two wing-like gold hands that sit opposite each other but never at the same time, as each is designed to take turn reading the minutes. When one hand reads 55 minutes, the dance begins when they both are set in motion. The second hand will get into position and when the first hand lands on the 60th minute, the second hand will start reading its minutes from 00 on the semi-circular dial indexes and numerals arrangement. All numerals and indexes are in gold and the hands are in pink gold.

The engine that powers the dance is an inhouse manufacture automatic mechanical movement Calibre BVL 252 with jumping hours function. This movement comes in a pink gold case. The watch also comes in white gold with matching indexes and hands. 18

Eternally yours

One of the most sophisticated mechanisms created for a watch is the perpetual calendar. Not only is it a grand complication, it is also one of the most practical of timepieces. Audemars Piguet is one of the forerunners in manufacturing them, and here is an exceptional piece.

Words by Leong Wong





Above

Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Perpetual Calendar.

Right

An early Islamic astrolabe for determining location and time.

THE MOST COMMONLY used calendar today is the Gregorian calendar, which created the anomaly of the leap year—every four years an extra day is added in February (29 days instead of 28). First introduced in 1582, the Gregorian calendar is preferred due to its accuracy and efficiency in charting the years compared to lunar calendars. The Gregorian calendar has become the norm and is used by virtually all watches.

PERPETUAL CALENDAR IN A WRISTWATCH

There are several kinds of calendar watches—date, day/date, day/date and month, annual calendar and perpetual calendar. A movement with a perpetual calendar is unlike any other calendar. It is armed with the ability to change the date of the months including February with its anomaly, and it can also intelligently take the leap year into consideration. It is just like a mini mechanical computer and it is by far the most practical to have as well as being one of the most complicated watches to make.

The first perpetual calendar made its appear-

ance on a wristwatch in 1930, but it was so challenging to execute that only one was made. Taking up the challenge in 1955, Audemars Piguet introduced their first perpetual calendar in a wristwatch and gave it a little extra that was previously missing: a leap year indicator. Since then, the perpetual calendar has been a strong pillar of the watch company (even through the quartz crisis) and they have not stopped innovating.

Another challenge that a watchmaker must also face is the miniaturisation and slimming of the movement. The parts and components would have to be made smaller and thinner than they already were. That did not stop Audemars Piguet from attempting to reduce the thickness of the super complicated perpetual calendar, which seemed like a near impossible feat. And yet they did it. In 1978 the thinnest perpetual calendar with an automatic movement was introduced, secretly created by the very talented master watchmaker Michel Rochat and his highly skilled team.

A MODERN HOST

Royal Oak was introduced in 1972 out of necessity, due to the demand for a stainless steel watch from the company that only made watches with precious metal. Audemars Piguet engaged the prolific Gerald Genta to design a watch for their participation at the Basel watch fair. It took the watch designer and master watchmaker a day to come up with a design, which is now one of the most enduringly iconic wristwatches. It was not until 1984 that the Royal Oak collection had the honour of hosting the extrathin automatic perpetual calendar.

For 2015, Audemars Piquet unveiled its latest brand 'new' Royal Oak Perpetual Calendar. It's not only redesigned, but it also come in a new size and movement. The watchmakers at Audemars Piquet have once again upped the ante to come up with another exceptional perpetual calendar. The design is similar to the original with its iconic octagonal bezel, only this time with a more elegant slant and a slimmer case, and yet it is still able to accommodate the new technical achievement of the movement within.

The dial has also gone through a redesign. It is now decorated with "Grande Tapisserie" that has raised squares, a textured base and four sub-dials-day at three o'clock, month and leap year counter at 12 o'clock, date counter at three o'clock and a new highly detailed astronomical moon for the moonphase at six o'clock. A new addition that is very useful for those who need to know which week of the month we are in, is a 52 weeks counter on the inner bezel. The appliqués hour indexes and hands are white gold or pink gold, depending on the choice of metal of the case, and are coated with luminescent.



THE LATEST RENDITION

The pièce de résistance of the latest edition of the Royal Oak Perpetual Calendar is the new movement, calibre 5134. The movement has been redesigned from scratch to enable it to be thinner that its predecessor.

The trick has been to suspend the barrel so that it now sits on the same level as the main plate instead of sitting amongst other movements. This technical achievement makes everything thinner. Every micron saved is a micron won.

The hand-finishing on the movement on all Audemars Piguet timepieces is immaculate, and this new movement is no exception. Even though the parts are a lot smaller and thinner, they are nonetheless all hand-finished. The mainplate is decorated with circular-grained, while the bridges are all decorated with Cote de Genève and are bevelled. The rotor is carved out from a 22CT gold monobloc which is engraved with 'AP' and the rest is decorated with 'Tapisserie". It is bidirectional, swinging on four jewel runners to greatly reduce wear and tear. The moonphase is highly accurate and since you only need to adjust it once every 125 years and 317 days, you won't have to worry too much about that. The movement, with all its new glorious complexity, is only 4.31MM thick, which is a feat on its own.

The watches come in two variants-stainless steel or a pink gold case with bracelet, each with their own variation of either a silver dial or a blue dial. The tough and sporty-looking design makes it a worthy timepiece to invest in, especially when it comes with the super useful perpetual calendar. One you can wear on any occasion, from penthouse to palace. 12



Audemars Piguet

Manufacture in 1907.

Jules Audemars Piguet and Edward Pigeut

Time flies

As soon as aircraft began conquering the sky at the beginning of the 20th Century Breitling seized the opportunity to make their mark on aviation history with their specialist wristwatches for the daring pilots.

Words by Leong Wong

THE INDUSTRIAL Revolution of the nineteenth century had been good for Switzerland. When once the people of the Alpine nation had been farmers who happened to make watches in the winter, Switzerland progressed to becoming a nation revered for scientific instruments, timing devices and precision instruments. Soon their skill and experience in making high quality precision instruments gave them an unassailable edge over others in Europe.

The Jura Mountains of Switzerland is perhaps the heartland of Swiss watchmaking production and it was there that Léon Breitling founded his workshop in 1884, specialising in chronographs and timing devices. He created, of course, Breitling watches. The business grew quickly and he soon moved his operations to a bigger premise in 1892. This time coincided with the dawn of new age of exploration and mobility into uncharted territories, and it was also a new world of technological achievements. Gaston Breitling,

the founder's son, was a great engineer in his own right and he introduced the world's first two-pusher chronograph activator (for start/stop and reset), a technique that made the watch more robust and reliable. The two pushers are still being widely used to this day.

Breitling watches made a name for itself in the aviation world after Willy (Leon's grandson) took over the company. He saw that there was a market opening for specialised aviation watches that not only had the time but also had conversion scales. The company managed to win an important contract with the British Air Ministry to provide them with their timepieces that came replete with conversion scales. These watches were very suitable for pilots who needed to time distances and make calculations on flight speed, fuel consumption, etc. Breitling went on to invent scales on the bezel, making the watches of even more practical value for aviators and which has become the Breitling trademark. Their usefulness and fame has taken

Below Made by Breitling. Original 1924.



the watch beyond the world of reckless aviators and fighter pilots, and into the realm of commercial pilots. And all because of their ingenious use of sliding scales on their watches. It was Willy Brietling's foresight that made the family watch company great.

The world of aviation has since taken to the vacuum of space. In the 1960s, the US Navy Lt. Commander Scott Carpenter wore a Navitimer on his mission with Mercury Atlas 7 space program. He had commissioned Breitling to make a watch with 24 hours instead of the usual 12 hours, as he would have no way of telling apart day from the night. The 24 hours feature that was of invaluable practical use for Mercury 7 has since taken over the lives of more earthbound travellers.

Breitling's innovation kept coming. In 1969 Breitling introduced what was the very first chronograph watch with an automatic winding system. This was the triumphant birth of the Chronomat. but unfortunately a few years later the Swiss watch industry went quiet and almost stopped ticking for good. The world was suddenly overtaken by the revolutionary quartz movement. Watches could now be made (mostly in Japan) that were as accurate as any Swiss watch and at much lower prices, forcing Breitling to shut its factory doors. But not for long. A pilot by the name of Ernest Schneider decided to take over the watch company and carry on making Breitling watches, and instead of shunning the quartz movement, he embraced it. He used the new technology and incorporated it into the traditional wristwatch with a quartz digital display, which happened to allow pilots to have an even better view.

In 1984, at the very height of the quartz domi-

nation, Breitling decided to relaunch the Chronomat and this time with a mechanical chronograph, which is now its best selling model. It had been awhile since Breitling had been the prime mover and shaker in the watch industry, so their engineers decided to do something about it and in 2009 they unveiled a first in the history of Breitling. They created their very own chronograph movement; the Breitling Calibre 01, a high-performance calibre with an automatic winding system. In the past, Breiting had never made its own movement entirely in-house. Even in the days of the founding father, he had bought components from Swiss manufacturers and then assembled them himself, so for a movement to be developed and manufactured in-house was indeed a milestone for Breitling.

As a result of this innovation, Breitling is becoming very close to being totally independent, and is now a fully paid up member of the superexclusive Manufacture Club. Over the years they have produced several in-house Manufacture Breitling calibres to add to the longtime lonesome B01. Now it has the B04, B05 and the latest B14 for company, and surely there will be more to come.

Breitling has come a long way for an independent watch company, thanks to the foresight of all its leaders. Their ability to see into the future has helped the company reach its present peak, as has the latest ingenious engineering of the double level chronograph in the Transocean Chronograph 1915 with a monopusher for the start/stop/reset. 100 years after Breitling first attempted to move the chronograph activator out of the crown with a separate pusher; now the monopusher shows they still have some tricks up their sleeves. 18





Ton

Renaissance of the Chronograph. The Breitling Chronomat 1984

Above

Breitling's first step to independent pusher. The first chronograph pusher in a watch, 1923.

THE NEW GENERATION

Chronomat 44 Stainless steel case with unidirectional bezel. Grey dial with applique steel index hour markers and hands coated with luminescent. Three sub-dials for continuous seconds and chrono counters.

Manufacture Calibre B01 automatic mechanical movement with 70 hours power reserve.



Navitimer BO4

Stainless steel case. Ivory dial with slide rule on the inner bezel and outer flange. Three sub-dials for small seconds and chrono counters. Applique steel hour index markers and steel hands coated with luminescent. Red tipped central GMT hand and red central chrono hand. Manufacture Calibre BO4 automatic mechanical movement with GMT and chronograph functions and 70 hours power reserve.



Transocean Chornograph Unitime

Stainless steel case. Black outer dial with globe centre dial. Rotating 24 cities time zones on the outer flange. Steel applique hour index markers accented with luminescent and steel hands coated with luminescent. Three silver sub-dials for continuous seconds and chrono counters. Manufacture Calibre B05 automatic mechanical movement with 70 hours of power reserve.



Transocean Chronograph 1915

Stainless steel case. Ivory dial with beige luminescent Arabic numeral hour markers. Steel hour and minute hands coated with luminescent. Central chrono seconds hand moves at ¼ seconds. Two sub-dials for continuous seconds and minute chrono counter. Manufacture Calibre B14 handwound mechanical movement with 70 hours power reserve. Monopusher, the third move.

New classic

Classic watches have been upgraded to become the new classic watches. The spurs have been advances in technology and the unstoppable force of design evolution but the results are stunning.



Jaeger-LeCoultre Geophysics True Second

The True Second is a direct inspiration from the 1958 watch that was created for scientists involved in the International Geophysical Year. Its aesthetics were clean and pure, and it simply had to work in jungles and on ice caps. The latest edition has taken purity further by cleaning up the 'extras' and making it even more simple and elegant, if that's possible. On the technological side, it has the complex engineering within to create a 'True Second'. This allows the hand to jump at each precise second, allowing for a movement that is more like a quartz and unlike the usual smooth sweeps. The watch comes in pink gold or stainless steel with grained silver-toned dial and appliqué gold index hour markers and gold hands. The working calibre is an automatic mechanical movement 40 hours of power reserve.



Bulgari Octo All Black

We've recently enjoyed the Rugby World Cup where Bulgari was the official sponsor for the defending champions, the All Blacks of New Zealand. To celebrate the partnership, Bulgari created a commemorative piece: the Octo All Blacks 100 Club. To pay homage to the amazing All Blacks, who have won more games and championships than any other team, the anthracite dial is designed with a traditional Maori mask designed by Maori carver Tana Salzmann. The watch is, of course, entirely black; the stainless steel case is coated with DLC (Diamond-Like Carbon) with a smoky transparent sapphire. The hour markers are of brushed polished appliqué indexes and the hands are black with Super-LuminNova. The engine is a Manufacture mechanical automatic movement with double barrel and 50 hours of power reserve.



IWC Portofino Day & Date

The latest addition to the effervescent range of watches from IWC Portofino is its third rendition of its famous and practical Hand-Wound 8 Days series. This time around they added the useful day indicator. The watch itself has remained unchanged and is still as elegant and clean as ever. The pink gold version comes with an anthracite dial with gold hour index markers and gold hands, with a large date at 12 oʻclock, the power reserve indicator at nine oʻclock and the small second at six oʻclock. The time is driven with precision by a hand-wound mechanical movement with eight days of power reserve.



Ulysse Nardin Classico Manufacture

The prestigious watchmaker has finally done it. They have made their very first in-house movement, which was designed, developed and manufactured by the company. The new calibre is called the UN-320 and has a silicium hairspring and anchor escapement, which translates into extreme accuracy and durability. The rose gold case is solid and powerful with eggshell blue, which is distinctively Ulysse Nardin. The hour indexes and Roman numeral hour markers are in gold and dotted with luminescent and hands are in gold filled with luminescent. The small second is at six o'clock where sits also the date. The manufacture movement is automatic with 48 hours of power reserve.



Breguet

Marine Chronograph 5823 "200 ans de Marine"

Time flies for the revered watch company. It has been 200 years since the founder, Abraham-Louis Breguet, was appointed as the chronometer maker to the French Royal Navy under King Louis XVIII. It was a challenge Breguet met with glee and he made a chronometer that could withstand the constant movement of a boat without affecting the time. The Breguet Marine Chronograph 5823 "200 ans de Marine" Edition is obviously much smaller and more practical as it sits beautifully on your wrist. It comes in platinum with their signature fluted caseband. The black dial is decorated with a wave-like guilloche decorated with applique Roman numerals hour indexes and gold hands with luminescent. Continuous seconds at nine o'clock and the chrono hours and date at six o'clock, the chrono seconds and minutes are centrally located. The movement beneath that powers the watch is an automatic mechanical with 48 hours power reserve. This is quite simply a beauty and is limited to only 200 pieces.



Glashutte Original Senator Observer

One of the most revered German watch companies has always been providing us with some of the most classic looking watches. Though their watchmaking history might not have been as long as for the Swiss, their watches are just as well executed and engineered with their very own distinctly familiar and instantly recognizable look. This version has a stainless steel case with a lacquered matte black dial, with a snail track around the outer flange in white, green Super-LumiNova Arabic numeral hour markers with steel hands coated with green Super-LumiNova. Small second at nine o'clock and the power reserve at three o'clock. Automatic mechanical movement with 55 hours of power reserve.

















The road of reinvention

Montblanc is going through a period of reinvention. To showcase their savoir-faire in the fine art of watchmaking, here are some exemplary pieces direct from their manufacture in Villeret, Switzerland.





Тор

Heritage Chornometrie Dual Time
Stainless steel case. Silvery white dial with rhodium-plated applique hour markers and hands, with a blue hand for the home time. 24 hour display at 12 o'clock and small second at six o'clock. Manufacture automatic mechanical movement.

Bottom

Heritage Chronometrie Ultraslim
Red gold case. Silver dial with gold-plated applique hour markers
and hands. Automatic mechanical movement.







Far left

Timewalker Urban Speed UTC E-Strap

Stainless steel case. Black dial with luminescent arabic and index hour markers. Rhodium plated hands coated with luminescent, with red second hands and redtipped hand for second time zone. Automatic mechanical movement.

Left

Timewalker Urban Speed date automatic

Stainless steel case. Black dial with luminous Arabic hour and index hour markers. Rhodium-plated hands with luminescence and red central second hand. Mechanical movement.

Below

Timewalker Urban Speed Chronograph E-Strap

Matte stainless steel case with black ceramic bezel. Black dial with luminescent Arabic and index hour markers and three sun dials. Rhodium-plated hands and red central second hands. Automatic mechanical chronograph movement.



Heritage Chronometrie Quantieme Complet

Stainless steel case. Silver white dial and rhodium plated hands, and applique hour indexes and arabic markers. Day and month window. Moonphase at six o'clock. Automatic mechanical movement with 42 power reserve.

Right Heritage Chronometrie Quantieme Complet Vasco de Gama

Pink gold case. Silver dial with gold plated indexes and hands. Annual calendar with date indicators. Moonphase indicator. Automatic mechanical movement with day, date and month annual calendar.



ESQUIRE 10

THE INFLUENCERS

Products that perform under the spotlight.

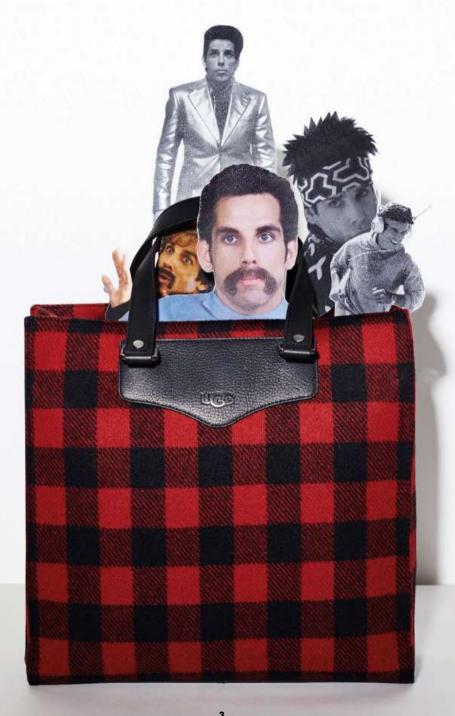
Photographs by Wong Weiliang, 328 Productions Art Direction by Priscilla Wong Styling by Lim Siu Fang Words by Janie Cai



1.
FRED PERRY FEDORA
OI' Blue Eyes didn't just have his
golden voice and snazzy dancesteps. He also had his hat.

2.
LOUIS VUITTON TIE
Men in the spotlight need a
tough tie. None more so than a
head of state, like the president
of the US of A.





3.
UGG TOTE BAG
Bring this anywhere, from a night at the museum to thundering in the tropics of Madagascar.

4.
PAUL SMITH BOW TIE
Pick up a style tip or two from
The Tramp in a real rags-toriches tale.



5.
BAUME AND MERCIER
HAMPTON TIMEPIECE
Because time passes but
memory persists.





6.
GUCCI SCARF
Well, let us tell you something
brother—this scarf is
running wild.







9.
FENDI PEEKABOO BAG
A genius needs a sturdy case
to keep all his notes. Everything
else is relative.



A TALE OF TWO (LIGURIAN) TOWNS

And no, we're not talking about the Cinque Terra here. For—unlike that over-touristed route, especially from May to September—the Italian choice is somewhere else. Taken together, two villages on the *Riviera di Levante* become the *dolce vita* choice.

Words by Sam Coleman

THE CHATTER among magazine editors at the Milan Spring/Summer 2016 men's shows is of the usual sort that gets flung out of the mouths of coifed and on-trend pros who do the LON/MXP/PAR circuit twice a year, year in and year out. "Raf was boringly perfect"; "Riccardo has a messiah complex"; "Paris was horrible! I want one of those little electric hand fans... but only if Karl [Lagerfeld] would design one, hehe."

However, one of the perks of those hyper-international conversations can be that gems of European discovery are parsed and disseminated. Firenze? Please, that's Pitti-ful: far better to skip the last few days and hit San Gimignano or Bolgheri; Tallinn is the new Berlin; Folégandros in Greece is where you go to see the Cyclades, not Santorini. Still, if you can wade through the eye rolls of any-





PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM COLEMAN. ESQUIRE NOVEMBER 2015 231

A tale of two (Ligurian) towns



thing that even hints at uncool, then some true discoveries can be made.

For instance, on this particular jaunt, a fashion editor from Hong Kong, born in Italy but calling the Asian city home, reacted with some concern about my choice of Cinque Terra for a betweenshow weeks retreat. "Really?" he questions, "You sure?" I find myself getting self-conscious about the choice, wondering what he is getting at. "It's just that Cinque Terra is so packed with tourists at this time of the year. Maybe save it for early spring and do some other villages instead. I mean, if you want to go where Italians go, I could suggest something," he teases, knowing such information is the holy grail of advice.

When I smile and say yes please, he grins back, whips out his phone and brings up a Google map of Liguria, Italy's smallest province, one that was—for most of modern Italian holiday-making history—the go-to place for the Latin North, where Milanese and other city folk would escape to in the warm months. They would have their favoured village and hotel, and rented their umbrellas at their favoured beaches (*stabilimento balneare*) months in advance, and of course, the rich would simply have an apartment there.

However, the last 20 years have changed that dynamic. Increasingly, as the cost of travel has decreased due to low-cost carriers, the routes to places like Sardinia, Amalfi, and even Sicily have drawn these Italians to their fold. With less mass tourism, great food and even slightly cheaper costs (if you're Italian, that is), it's understandable how this shift has happened. Yet, for all that, Liguria does have an undiminished charm, a lure that—if you do it right—can be as compelling as any in Italy, north or south. The trick is how to do it right.

The answer comes by way of two places savagely different in temperament and class: Camogli and Portofino. We start from the working class and move towards glamour.

Camogli, a quiet fishing village that was "discovered" in the '60s, became a middle-class beach of choice for many, a place that was simple, affordable and beautiful. Giovanni Belafonte, a retired Milanese man in his sixties, is like many who found themselves in Camogli in those years. He bought a house in the '70s and spent weekends when he could and the long European vacation month of August here, typically with his wife and two children, a passion for fishing shared by the whole family. But-over time-the wife wanted to go to other Italian places with girlfriends and the kids started to venture abroad for surfing ("Bali is their favourite," he states), and soon, Belafonte found himself spending time in the village alone. Divorced, he left the Milan house to his wife and moved here full time. "You see, Camogli is very different from other towns in Liguria. There (Genoa, Rapallo), it's a bigger place, faster; getting to know



Previous spread
The beach of Camogli.

Тор

Fisherman Piero Galliano.

Top, right

La Sagra and its giant frying pan.

Right

Entering the Gulf of Tigullio to Portofino.

people is harder. Here, there's a common language. And that common language, that living heritage, is fishing." His partner-in-crime, Piero Galliano, nods in agreement as he attaches a lure. He's a local, abrasion of sun against skin worn as a badge of hard-won pride, the calluses on his hands, stigmata of passion for the sea.

Fishing is still the mainstay of this place, a way of life that sits astoundingly well with that more invasive industry of tourism. On one side of Camogli is the façade that Ligurian towns are known for: the *trompe l'oeil* balconies and windowsills, the bright fruit colours that sit languidly over the lapis lazuli sea. For those coming for the postcard beauty, the Basilica Minore di Santa Maria Assunta—sitting out on a small spit—is the unicorn moment they seek. A gentle spur of yellow and burnt umber, it nestles the small Gulf of Paradise in its curvature, letting the pebble coast be speckled with banks of umbrellas.

The small promenade above the beach has restaurants and cafés, but surprisingly, doesn't seem as overwhelming, as gauche, as many other similar towns. It seems like it was in the '60s, a reminder of somewhat more innocent times of travel. "In some ways, I like Camogli now more than I did when I was younger," says Beatrice Verdina, who grew up in Camogli and returned after school in Rome to run a small shop here. "I think we've avoided some of the problems that, say, Rimini on the Adriatic

coast has experienced: that really hardcore type of mass tourism. Maybe it's because we're small, our beaches aren't sand, and we don't really have shopping. But frankly, I prefer it, and I prefer the kind of tourists who come. They're more loyal—I see many people come back season after season—and they're more reasonable."

Turn the corner through Via Al Porto, and the village shows its working side with Belafonte and Galliano types, and the more professional crews





A tale of two (Ligurian) towns of fishermen setting forth. "You see that bird? His name is Pedro. He's a bit of a celebrity for us. and lets us know whether the fishing will be good or bad," Belafonte declares happily. But unfortunately, for many of the fishermen, Pedro's talisman is more omen than opportunity. "The larger, industrial boats have certainly had an impact on the catch here; certain fish have decreased substantially," Galliano explains, a trajectory that is hotly debated. For without fishing-without the abundance of the sea as identity-Camogli would be existentially a very different place. Camogli began as a fishing town, and its shipbuilding prowess and the acumen of its sailors quickly drew the attention of military scouts. The simple fishing boats grew to be a fleet of what became known as the Camogli Tall Ships, a "Thousand White Sails" that served Napoleon's fleet and others. At its height in 1880, the city boasted a population of 12,000 (it's now roughly 5,000) with 500 patented ship captains. And the reason for the colourful facades? The legend is that they helped the fishermen see the village as they bobbed through the waves, scurrying back home from a day's catch.

To experience the union of the village with its two sides, the consolidation of its purposes, one must come in May, to one of the most curious festivals in all of Italy. La Sagra (or Fish Festival) was first enacted in 1952, when post-war Italy looked away from militarism to tourism to preserve itself. Lawyer Filippo Degregori and fisherman Lorenzo "o Napoli" Viacava, tapping into the religious San Fortunatto festival (the patron saint of fishermen and yes, saint of good fortune), which happens during the same weekend, created a slightly OTT idea that works to this day. Their vision: the local fishermen and their wives would show visitors that there is no finer seafood nor generosity than what can be found in Camogli, with a fish fry that would be unparalleled. It started off with six frying pans that went to hundreds, and then-in a vision of showmanship and marketing vision-Degregori and Viacava came up with an idea that would literally put Camogli on the map. They envisioned a giant frying pan, the biggest in history for their fish

Castello Brown, Portofino.



fry, and so commissioned blacksmiths to create a pan 10M long, weighing an incredible 1,500KG. Though those massive pans are retired, replaced by stainless steel ones, the output is still as impressive: 3,000KG of fish is served in almost 6,000 portions doled out free of charge. Meanwhile, fireworks, races and processions turn Piazza Colombo into one of the most festive places in Italy. "It's certainly a sight to see if you're in Italy in May," assures Verdina.

On the other side of the peninsula, through the winding road roughly 18km from Camogli, is the more cosmopolitan sister of Liguria. Portofino is almost everything that Camogli is not: it is jet set, with prices akin to St Barths, and where Dior, Louis Vuitton, Saint Laurent and some of the most exclusive retailers in the world do brisk business. While Camogli has reasonable accommodation in Hotel Casmona, Portofino has the Belmond Hotel Splendido, possibly one of the finest hotels in all of Italy. It is no accident that Tom Ford named his scent Portofino, that Tod's new collection is an ode to the place, that one of IWC's most successful models is the Portofino. What fishing is to Camogli, glamour is to Portofino.

And frankly, with the Gulf of Tigullio gently pulling in the small sea craft as the deeper water holds the massive Russian yachts, the semantics of Portofino make perfect sense. "Of course, many rich people come here and we're fine with that," says Lorenzo Abelli, a constable with the Italian *polizia*. "There are some excesses, of course, but that's mostly confined to the yachts. It's always a very lively, international atmosphere here."

The heart of that aspect of the village is the piazzetta, the centre of wining and dining, of being seen and discreetly catching which celebrity might be hidden behind a wide-brimmed sun hat or oversized aviators. Mariah Carey visited in June, and Jay Z and Beyoncé spent some time in winter here. Lana Del Ray is fond of the place, so much so that she's been back almost three times in the last six months. And let us not forget that Portofino is one of the most elite wedding and honeymoon destinations in the world, with Wayne Rooney splashing out an incredible GBP5 million on his wedding, and John Legend and Chrissy Teigen doing what many a celeb honeymoon pair do by booking into the Hotel Splendido for a few nights. They follow in the footsteps of Bogart and Bacall, Sophia Loren, Ingrid Bergman and Clark Gable, to name a few. Even culturally, Portofino has been a source of inspiration. Zarathustra was born here, as Nietzsche walked the bay; Freud calculated his thoughts on the superego here, as well as Rapallo; Ernest Hemingway rested and recuperated amongst the pines.

The 7PM aperitivo is the culmination of all this glitz and endowment: where the yacht owners, celebs and lovers of Italian *élan* imbibe on *giancu de Purtufin*, a wine that combines several of the territory's grapes and is only produced locally. They chat, smile into the setting sun and lean back into

deckchairs with the water serving as a light reflector; a feeling of protection from paparazzi, a shared sense of ease for a class that feels envious stares perpetually. Among peers, that feeling surely dissipates.

Meanwhile, a more sublime activity of these hills plays out. Since the days of the Crusaders who brought back objects of beauty and power to the Church San Giorgio, Portofino has combed her fair hair and cultivated devotion. The Gothic Oratory of the Brotherhood of Mary Assumed (Oratorio della Confraternita dell'Assunta) houses one of the finest relics in Italy: a 12th-century wooden statue of the Assumption of the Virgin. "She is special. I come here almost everyday just to look at her," says a young priest in ink black robes, in between confessional duties, gliding as if without moving his feet. "Of course, it's very nice that Portofino is so popular as a tourist destination but—if you take the time to look-it has a lot of amazing spiritual history. I bet you didn't know that the Hotel Splendido was actually a monastery before it was sold to the hotel group?" he queries, and the answer is no, few realise that.

Coming up to the top peak and entering Castello Brown, the fortress that overlooks the gulf, a sense of wonder permeates. The young priest's words stay in my ears, as well as the pre-Christian founding of Portofino. The Romans called it *Portus*

Delphini: Port of the Dolphin, a wise and elegant animal that frequented the waters at the time of Pliny the Elder. It seems appropriate, prescient even, that thousands of years ago, in a precursor to Christianity, dolphins once played happily here. Meanwhile, halfway between Camogli and Portofino, at a resting depth of 17M, a statue lies, with arms outstretched into the glowing blue of the Mediterranean. "Christ of the Abyss", as he is called, a fisherman who collects souls, a protector of those who call the sea home and draw sustenance from it, even yachts that cross its surface, silently watches the Liguria. A small, lithe smile crosses his face.

Below

The pool at the Belmond Hotel Splendido, Portofino.

Bottom

"Christ of the Abyss", off San Fruttuoso





THE BARBER DOSSIER: MUNICH

Bavaria's capital excels at life's simple delights.

Words by Tom Barber

MUNICH is a cultured place. There are theatres, opera houses and galleries galore, but don't let that put you off—the city's true genius is an ability to elevate more modest pleasures to the status of high art. Witness the class of the football team, Bayern Munich, the chic sophistication of car maker BMW and, above all, the craft of Bavarian beer-making, which reaches its zenith in the Oktoberfest when nearly 6.5M litres of Pilsner are consumed in just over two weeks with barely a brawl, at least not involving the locals. *Prost!* 12

Tom Barber is a founder of the award-winning originaltravel.co.uk

1. DRINK

As discussed, Bavarians go bonkers for beer (factoid: the state is home to 700 breweries) and the best place to drink the golden stuff is, appropriately enough, in a beer garden. The Viktualienmarkt, a food market and square, can get touristy but the beer garden is a classic example of Germanic egalitarianism: the Pilsner is served from vast wooden barrels supplied by Munich's big six breweries on rotation every six weeks. Try to time your run to coincide with Augustiner, the best in show. viktualienmarkt.de

2. STAY

At the Cortiina Hotel, which is perfectly locaed within walking distance of the best bits of the city. Understated and extremely classy, the hotel is the flagship property of the Kull & Weinzierl partnership responsible for many of Munich's hippest bars and restaurants. Watch the sunset from the rooftop bar or enjoy one of nearly 30 gin brands in the Cortiina Bar. Opposite the hotel and owned by the same group, Bar Centrale will serve you a mean espresso to kick-start your day. cortiina.com



AVOID

Making a complete fool of yourself at the Oktoberfest/ Wiesn. The event is over 200 years old and despite the revelry, it is revered by Bavarians. So, don't come in a silly costume (unless that silly costume is your new lederhosen) and do soak up the pretty strong lager with regular requests for pretzels, roast chicken and Schwein every which way from the dirndlwearing waitresses. oktoberfest.eu

3. LUNCH

At Brenner Grill, a lovely restaurant with vaulted ceilings in a discreet courtyard off Maximilianstrasse. Chefs knock out fresh lobster or delicious Swiss Simmental Goldbeef steaks on a large open grill, accompanied by fine German and Italian wines and some of the more attractive diners you'll ever sit near. Eat on the terrace if the weather's good. brennergrill.de

4. DINE

At Nürnberger Bratwurst Glöckl, in a 400-year-old building beside the Frauenkirche, famed for its Nürnberger Schweinswürstl mit Kraut (that's pork sausage and cabbage). This slice of pure Bavaria has been rammed pretty much permanently since it opened in 1893. bratwurst-gloeckl.de

5. PARTY

A city with such deep pockets was always going to have a nightclub to match, so enter stage left P1, the party play-ground for Munich's millionaires and attendant übermodels. Face control on the door is predictably strict, but you read Esquire, so once you're in you can enjoy a chic interior, great dance DJs and wall-to-wall Teutonic totty. p1-club.de

6. SHOP

Head to Angermaier to buy yourself some lederhosen. They will prove to be the most comfortable item of clothing you ever own, you never need to wash them (result) and wearing them at the Oktoberfest means you won't stand out as a tourist quite as much. trachten-angermaier.de

7. DO

Drool over some of the best-looking cars ever made—including this 2002 TI built in 1968—at the BMW Museum. The building's extraordinary architecture is reason enough to visit, but then you can also immerse yourself in the century-long evolution of one of the world's most famous car (and motorcycle) marques. bmw-welt.com

8. SEE

The Englischer Garten is a huge park in the centre that's home to more beer gardens, but we're here to see the surfers. The man-made Eisbach river running through it has had a neat standing wave since engineers in the Seventies tried to slow the flow with concrete blocks. As these blocks are a couple of feet below the surface, this is very much a "see" and not a "do" unless you're a pro surfer.

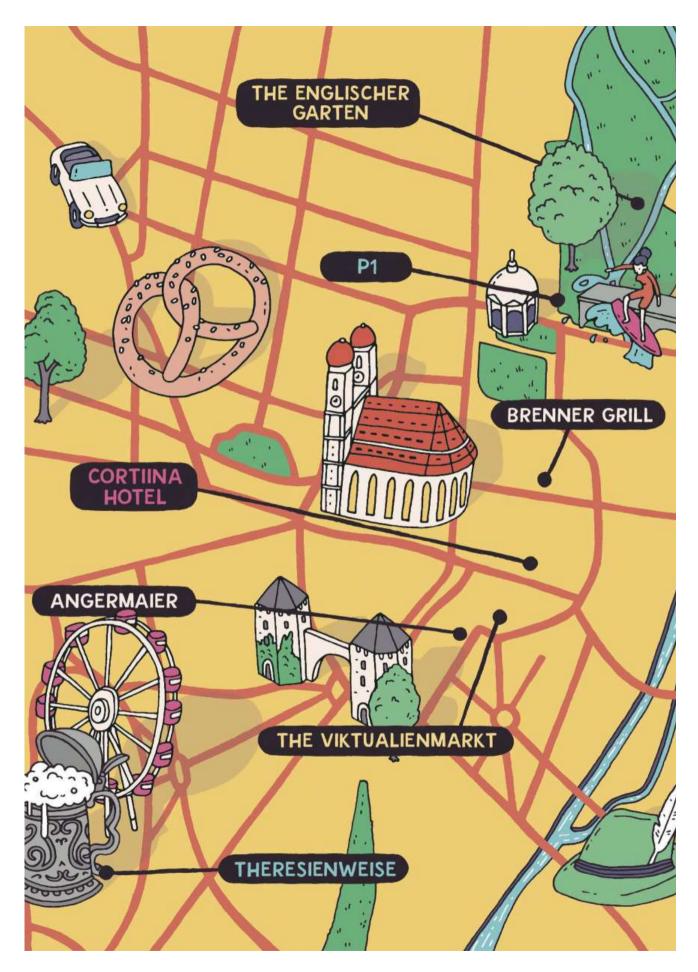
9. WHY NOW?

While most might be keen on going over during Oktoberfest, many locals would quickly point out that said festival is the mainstream tourist attraction. To truly enjoy Munich to its finest is probably during non-peak periods.

10. WHEN IN...

Refer to the Oktoberfest as *Wiesn*, which means "meadow", because the mutter of all bierfesten takes place in Theresienwiese, a huge square to the west of the centre.









ONE FOR THE ROAD

Tumi teams up with Mini for a travel-and-adventure-driven collection.

YOU'VE CHECKED the tyre pressure. You've filled the petrol tank. You've got a great playlist loaded. But are you really ready for your road trip? Wait. We think you shouldn't hit the highway without stylish travel gear in tow.

Travel retail giant Tumi has teamed up with Mini for a bold new collection enriched with striking accents. Featuring seven travel and two accessory silhouettes that weave together Tumi's signature texture and technical innovations and Mini's vibrant colour accents, this collection is engineered using Tumi's propriety FXT® ballistic nylon. With an additional secondary bag—a removable duffle or portfolio—the travel kit has a convenient two-in-one versatility.

When it comes to the design, Mini's signature Black and Volcanic Orange racing stripe and Black and Deep Blue Union Jack flag are visible throughout. The colourful accent kits also offer a personalisation option, while the lining of every bag is embossed with the Mini grill pattern. Now you're ready to go. §2



COMING NEXT MONTH

THE UNDERDOGS ISSUE:

An Esquire investigation on refugees...

...and the 1st anniversary of the East Coast floods

It's not all grim:

Some football

Travel to beautiful Margate

The fashion you rely on...

...And some Star Wars!

On sale late November 2015



THIS WAY OUT

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Spot the 13 differences in this photo and let us know what they are and you might just be in for a special surprise. The answers and winner will be revealed next month.

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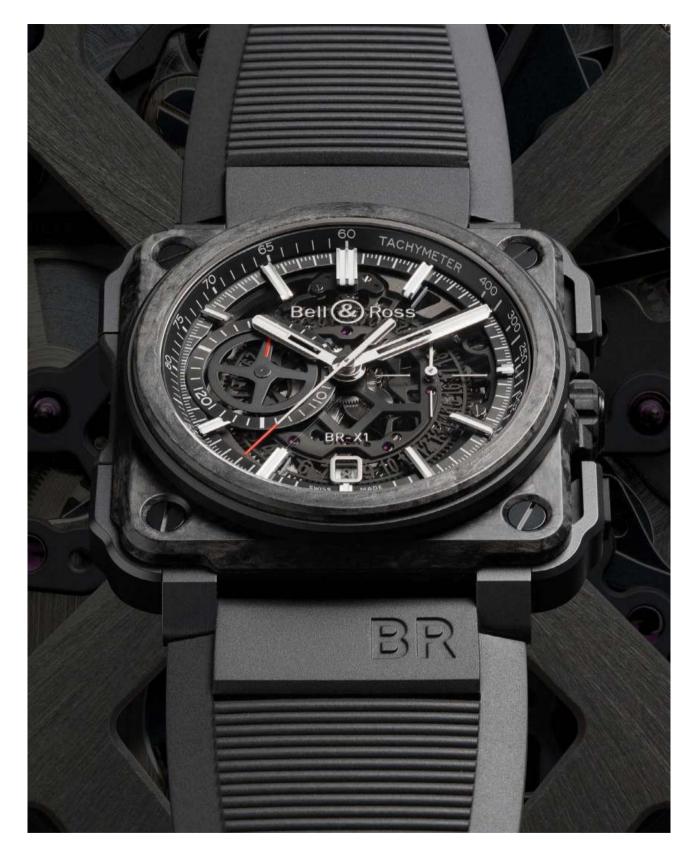
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